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OCTOBER 2001
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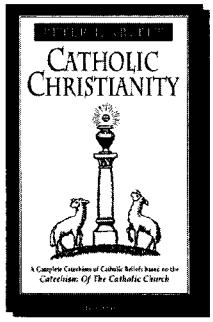

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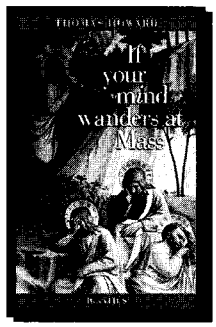

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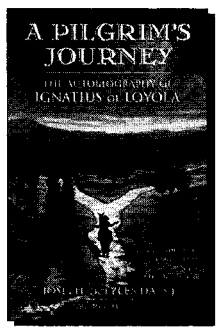

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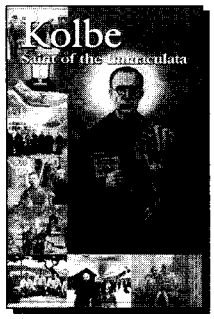

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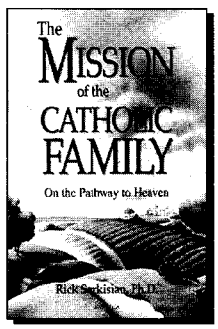

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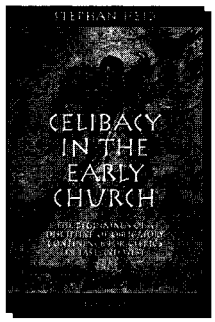

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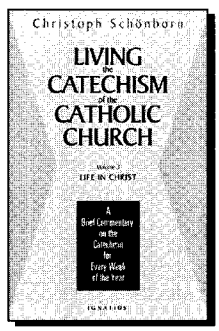

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Editor: *James Nuechterlein*
Associate Editor: *Damon Linker*
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Editorial Assistant: *Matthew Rose*
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Publisher: *Institute on Religion and Public Life*
Publishing Service: *Publishing Management Associates*

First Things (ISSN #1047-5141) is published monthly (except for combined issues June/July and August/September) for $34 per year ($14.97 for students) by The Institute on Religion and Public Life, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010. Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY and additional mailing office. POSTMASTER: send address changes to First Things, P.O. Box 401, Mt. Morris, IL 61054. **Editorial Offices:** The Institute on Religion and Public Life, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010. **Editorial Phone:** (212) 627-1985. **Email:** ft@firstthings.com. **Website:** http://www.firstthings.com. **Advertising Offices:** 129 Phelps Avenue, Suite 312, Rockford, IL 61108. **Advertising Phone:** (815) 398-8569. **Email:** firstthingsadsales@pma-inc.net. **Subscription Department:** P.O. Box 401, Mt. Morris, IL 61054. **Subscription Phone:** 1-877-905-9920. **Email:** subscriberservices@pma-inc.net. Unsolicited material cannot be returned unless accompanied by sufficient return postage. Newsstand distribution by Eastern News Distributors, Inc., One Media Way, 12406 Rt. 250, Milan, OH 44846. Copyright © 2001 by the Institute on Religion and Public Life. All rights reserved. Produced in the USA.

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Judging Historical Guilt

I was surprised to find in James Nuechterlein's "Pride and Patriotism" (May) a chain of arguments that struck me as rather un-Christian. I am not surprised to hear that "a great many Americans" find the German language quite revolting, being well conditioned to think immediately of Hitler, the Holocaust, and Nazism. Did they think of Bach, Beethoven, Kant, or Goethe at any other time between 1900 and today? Were any of them ever grateful to the German nation for having produced such extraordinarily gifted human beings, the likes of whom we have not met again and probably never will?

The moral burden on the German nation is a special one insofar as any moral burden is a special one. As for comparisons, I suggest a disinterested look at the crimes of Joseph Stalin, whose responsibility for mass murder surpasses Hitler's. Nevertheless, there is no hint of repulsion from the use of the Russian language, nor has there been any suggestion of a special burden on the Russian nation. We know why that is so: the Russians and the Red Army were the most useful allies the United States had in World War II.

That is why the indescribable atrocities committed by the Red Army in Germany, especially in Eastern Prussia, are not registered. The same applies to the torturing and murdering of Germans by Czechs and Poles, mostly after the war. They were allowed to drive twelve million Germans from their homes, more than two million of whom died of malnutrition, wounds, and diseases that were not treated because the persons afflicted were Germans.

Bombing German cities, American and British forces killed about 600,000 civilians, mostly women and children, outrageous examples being Hamburg and Dresden, where fire bombs were combined with other means of destruction in a way to make escape impossible. The will of destruction behind this can certainly be compared with that of the planners of concentration camps. It would appear to be quite impossible to take a lofty moral stance when you have to take responsibility for these acts of depravity.

More than a million German soldiers died in Soviet POW camps, and hundreds of thousands were left to die in open fields as POWs under American orders. One must bear in mind in considering this matter that these and other atrocities were committed by an alliance that claimed to fight for a better world, led by high moral standards. But then we know that the victorious party writes the history of past wars.

In short: in order to have the right to condemn Germans to all eternity the winners of 1945 would have to be able to present a totally clean conscience—not one that is whitewashed by closing one eye and substituting the other by a magnifying glass.

Gerald Frodl
Erlangen, Germany

James Nuechterlein replies:
Gerald Frodl has misread what I wrote. In the process of doing so, he raises large moral questions that I can respond to only in summary fashion.

I nowhere suggested that "the winners of 1945"—or their descendants—have the right "to condemn Germans to all eternity." Indeed, I clearly indicated that most Germans of today do not bear responsibility for the crimes of the Nazi regime. The great majority of them were not alive or not of age in those years, and the Germany they have built since 1945 bears no resemblance to that of the

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Hitler years. Therefore, I concluded, those Germans who today express normal patriotic pride in their country "seem to me correct."

Mr. Frodl goes much further than this. He suggests that the Nazis themselves could and can be criticized only by those "able to present a totally clean conscience." This argument fails on several grounds. First, *tu quoque* is not an adequate moral defense. The fact that the Allies themselves committed atrocities—as they did—does not exonerate the Nazis for their crimes nor require that those who fought them in sometimes deplorable ways abstain from moral criticism. Mr. Frodl seems one of the very few of today's Germans unable to recognize that point. (As for the implication that Bach, Beethoven, Kant, and Goethe somehow balance the ledger against Hitler, Goebbels, Göring, and Himmler, the less said of that the better.)

Second, the argument for moral equivalence between the Allies and the Nazis is repugnant. The Allies on occasion committed evil deeds, some of them horrific, in fighting Hitler. But their regimes (the USSR excepted) were not in themselves evil. The principles for which they fought were just, and the Nazi regime they rightly opposed was evil in essence and to its core. The moral burden associated with Nazi Germany is not a special one only "insofar as any moral burden is a special one." Nazi Germany rightly remains the icon of evil of the twentieth century. Does Mr. Frodl actually believe that that statement requires elaboration?

Third, while it is true that the presence on the Allied side of Stalinist Russia complicates moral judgment, it does not render it impossible. The other Allies, fully cognizant (some of them anyway) of Stalin's crimes, nonetheless fought alongside the USSR against Germany because they judged, surely correctly, that the Nazis represented the clearest immediate threat to civilization. And after the Nazis were taken care of, the Western Allies saw to the containment of the USSR.

Finally, I can only wonder what it is in my argument that makes it "un-Christian."

The Decline of Philosophy?

I very much appreciated Peter Simpson's essay on "The Christianity of Philosophy" (May). I agree with the author's viewpoint that modern and contemporary philosophy is much more like a worldly profession than what *philosophia* used to be in its ancient context. I would like to comment on three points in Professor Simpson's paper.

First, it should be noted that not even Greek philosophy understood *philosophia* as something ultimate. According to both Plato and Aristotle, *philosophia* does not only purport to reach wisdom; as Prof. Simpson rightly notes, it strives too to reach "salvation." Philosophical salvation, in accordance with their views, cannot be "reached" in the ordinary sense of the word: this is the moral of many passages in Plato and in Aristotle. In other words, what later became the dualism between philosophy and theology was already present in the classical Greek conception of *philosophia*. Greek philosophy was understood as a kind of "introduction" to some "brighter world" which cannot, properly speaking, be gained, but only somehow given (cf. for instance *Republic*, 531d; 518a; *Second Letter*, 313b).

Second, it needs to be considered whether modern philosophy can be treated exclusively in the context of decline or the breaking up of an original philosophical unity. I agree with Prof. Simpson's argument as to the role of Descartes in modern thought. I would, however, ask what in fact has taken place in the modern development of philosophy, or, more generally, in human history. I do not think that an approach based merely on a theory of decline is sufficient to understand this development—the development of our contemporary world. John Paul II's *Fides et Ratio* is indeed an important text which answers this problem only in an implicit way: it encourages its readers to reestablish "philosophy's sapiential dimension"; it invites its readers to continue fearlessly their inquiry for truth—a gesture you find also in Plato, for instance in the *Theaetetus*. Plato clearly thought that there was a certain logic in the course of any development, cosmological or philosophical, as is shown by his cosmological myth in the *Statesman*.

The third comment concerns the role of contemporary philosophy. My impression is that Etienne Gilson's approach to contemporary thought is not sufficient to understand either the relationship between Christianity and philosophy, or the very nature of philosophy itself. I find Prof. Simpson's skeptical comments on Hegel and Heidegger somewhat oversimplifying. It seems that as soon as we understand the classical conception of philosophy not only as a way to salvation but also as a kind of development described symbolically in the cosmological myth of the *Statesman*, then we may have a key to modern and contemporary philosophy as well. Or at least it becomes easier to understand the role of Hegel and Heidegger—or even that of Kant—in this development. True, none of them can legitimately aspire to the status of being the representative of "ultimate wisdom." But at least Heidegger did not intend to do so: he understood that philosophy can never have the final word.

It may be important to note that Christianity has an eschatological sense that is hardly expressed in philosophical terms. Philosophy, however, as Plato makes clear, was originally conscious of this dimension.

Professor Balazs Mezei
Department of Philosophy
Budapest University
Hungary

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Peter Simpson replies:

I am grateful to Professor Balazs Mezei for his comments on my essay. It is gratifying to learn that others have ideas similar to one's own. It is no less gratifying to receive from them responses that help one to clarify and correct those ideas.

Prof. Mezei's first comment about my essay concerns the fact that philosophy in its original sense was not understood, even by the Greeks, as ultimate but as a preparation or introduction for something "brighter" that one could not gain but only receive as a gift. In this sense Prof. Mezei sees Greek philosophy as already containing within it what later became the dualism between philosophy and theology. I certainly agree that philosophy was not viewed as ultimate insofar as it was desire for wisdom and not yet possession of wisdom (the message of Diotima's speech in Plato's *Symposium*). In this sense there is something beyond philosophy, namely, wisdom or *sophia* itself.

But this is not the sense I meant to speak of in my discussion of how medieval Christian theologians distinguished theology from philosophy. For in this sense there is something beyond theology too, namely, the beatific vision in which wisdom is finally seen face to face. Christianity did, indeed, give us a great deal more of wisdom, and a surer path to wisdom, than Greek philosophy was able to discover, but even Christianity does not give us final possession of wisdom this side of the grave.

The difference between philosophy and theology that I was trying to trace is rather a difference *within* the traditional sense of philosophy, or *within* the range of discursive reasoning. It is the difference between what we can know by unaided reasoning and what we can know by reasoning aided by Divine Revelation. I was not intending to trace the difference between discursive reasoning generally and mystical or beatific vision. I take it that what Plato is talking about in the passages Prof. Mezei refers us to is this difference between discursive reasoning and mystical vision.

Second, Prof. Mezei wonders whether one can properly treat modern philosophy as a decline or as a breakup of an original unity. He says there is in fact more to philosophy in our contemporary world than I seem to allow, and specifically that one can find there a continuing drive for truth and for wisdom. I do not disagree with the latter view, but my point was slightly different. I did not want to say that modern philosophy has declined so much as that it has absolutized a medieval Christian abstraction (though I think that did also, in fact, involve a decline).

The whole philosophical phenomenon of the ancient world embraced in one what medieval theologians, for purposes of analysis and clarification, factored into a part they called philosophy and another part they called theology. Modern philosophers took this medieval part called "philosophy" and made it the whole, which at once separated them not only from the medieval theologians but also from the ancient philosophers. In fact, most of them went further and made "philosophy" the handmaid, no longer of theology, but of science. Science became the source of superior wisdom—and for most people today it still is. But Prof. Mezei is right to say that there is no need to do this. One can, even today, philosophize while keeping philosophy's original sapiential dimension very much in mind. Prof. Mezei and I agree, following John Paul II, that that is what indeed we should be doing.

Third, and continuing on from this point, Prof. Mezei says that at least some of the great modern philosophers must be understood as retaining the sapiential dimension in their thinking, and he specifically mentions Hegel, Heidegger, and Kant. I agree with this as well, and my own too brief mention of Hegel and Heidegger in my essay was meant as a concession on that point. My skepticism was not about whether this was how they were to be understood but about how far their speculations really were wise. It is certainly true of Heidegger, and I would say of Kant too, that neither thought they had penetrated to the ultimate reality. They both thought there was a something beyond, which thinking could not reach. In this sense they were both Platonists and both mystics. Of course, the sapiential dimension they included within their thinking was that of the tradition of German Idealism, not that of the medieval theologians. And about German Idealism we have good reason, I think, to be skeptical.

The Jews and Jesus

Professor Thomas F. X. Noble has done a marvelous job of demolishing James Carroll's horrible book, *Constantine's Sword*, about Catholic-Jewish relations (May). In addition to all he said about the lack of scholarship, balance, and objectivity, he might have observed how insufferably boring the book was.

I wish, however, to make another observation. It is clear to all sides by now that the Christian break with Rabbinic Judaism and the Jews was essentially the work of Jewish Christians who saw in the Christian faith the true heir of biblical Judaism. What I would wish were more clear is that very large numbers of Jews, how many we cannot know, became Christians in the pre-Constantinian period. The Jewish rejection of Jesus as described by Paul of Tarsus was true largely during the period A.D. 40-60. Estimates of the Jewish population of the Roman Empire identify about 10 percent of the imperial population as Jewish. What happened to these people and their heirs so that by the end of the fifth century the Jews in the Empire, East and West, were a much smaller minority? Rodney Stark suggests persuasively that the mission of the Church to the Jews largely succeeded

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(*The Rise of Christianity*) and that these converted Jews disappeared as Jews, much I should say like the Ten Lost Tribes were not really lost but ceased to be Israelites and became, what, Syrians? Arabs? Who knows? Thus a lot of ink is spilled about the rabbinic remnant we call "the Jews," but little about the vast numbers who became Christian.

Professor Norman Ravitch
Department of History
University of California, Riverside

Abortion and Crime

Richard John Neuhaus offers a lively discussion of the paper Steve Levitt and I wrote concerning the impact of legalized abortion on crime (While We're At It, May). It seems that he thinks we shouldn't have written the piece, but I wonder if he can imagine why it might be helpful to know why crime has dropped so sharply in the 1990s. If the legalization of abortion is the reason, wouldn't that be important information? Our paper makes clear that reducing the number of unwanted births seems to have had important social benefits, but those benefits can be obtained by reducing unwanted pregnancies, which I would think Father Neuhaus would be interested in encouraging. I know that religious believers are often willing to sacrifice the truth to conform to some religious dogma, but I hope that First Things is not engaging in that historically discredited and socially harmful practice.

Professor John J. Donohue
Stanford Law School
Stanford, California

RJN replies:

The doctrine (or dogma, if one prefers), which is not uniquely religious, is that it is a grave wrong to kill an innocent human being. The problem with the study in question is not that it explores the relationship between abortion and crime but that, the authors' disclaimer notwithstanding, it at least implies that the unlimited abortion license contributes to the common good rather than, as I believe is the case, undermines the foundation of civilized order, and does so at the cost of millions of innocent lives and untold injury to women who are complicit in the killing of their children.

A Tumult of Translations

In "Bible Babel" (Public Square, May) Richard John Neuhaus argues, as he has before, for the superiority of the Revised Standard Version (RSV) over other English translations of the Bible. I would like to address a few comments made by him regarding his favorite translation.

Not including the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV), the RSV itself can be found in three editions. There is the original, which finds its completed copyright in 1952, a revision that was copyrighted in 1971, and a Catholic edition that is based on the original copyright with certain revisions to conform to Catholic tradition and copyrighted in 1965 and 1966. Interestingly, all of these editions are more or less "felicitous" translations of the Greek text; however, in spite of Father Neuhaus' assertions, none of them is exactly "above" all the others.

For example, in translating the words *malakoi* and *arsenokoitai* in 1 Corinthians 6:9, the 1952 edition uses the word "homosexuals" with a footnote indicating that two Greek words have been rendered by the one English word. The New American Standard Bible (NASB), the modern translation that most "gatekeepers" regard as the most true to the Greek texts, renders the two words as "effeminate" and "homosexuals," indicating the true meaning of what St. Paul is trying to convey. The 1971 edition of the RSV, however, renders the two words by the phrase "sexual perverts" and thereby removes any reference to homosexuality, leaving open to interpretation exactly what it is that St. Paul is condemning. What, one must ask, constitutes a sexual pervert? As a friend of mine has observed, "Sexual perversion is anything that goes one step beyond what I would do." So much for language conveying meaning. Even the NRSV, the edition that Fr. Neuhaus charges with being gender-inclusive (true) with dumbed-down language (arguable), renders the two Greek terms by their English equivalents: "effeminate" and "homosexuals." So much for the charge of this translation being "politically correct."

But all of this isn't necessarily to pick a fight with the RSV. It's just a point of indicating that there are, perhaps, better translations of the Scripture to be had. The updated NASB is an excellent translation, though I do wish that the word "bishop" had been retained for the Greek *episkopos* in 1 Timothy and Titus, and that "firepans" in the Old Testament had been left as "censers" (the latter being much less a theological nuance than the former, and even then both of these being much less so than the RSV-CE rendering of "brethren" for "brothers"). And the New International Version (NIV), another translation that receives Fr. Neuhaus' nod of approval, reads so closely to the NRSV that with the exception of the gender-inclusive language I'm not sure how it can escape the same charge of being "dumbed-down." Perhaps the New KJV is the closest thing to something that is both modern and "familiar to the ear," but neither is it free from its problems. So in the end, I'm not sure that either the RSV in the 1952 edition, or the 1971 edition, or the RSV-CE of 1965 is substantially better or more "felicitous" in its translation of the Greek texts than are the others mentioned. All, it seems, have their faults; some more, some less.

But I do sympathize with many of Fr. Neuhaus' views. The proliferation of English translations has crippled Bible memorization and virtually eliminated a common biblical language (and by the way, while

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there are perhaps over two hundred study *editions* of the English Bible, there are only a handful of actual English *translations*). And the exclusion of the Apocrypha from many of these translations seems to brighten the divide not only between those used by Protestants and those used by Catholics, but also the divide between the groups themselves.

So maybe in the end the real solution isn't to be found in an English translation that is used by all of English-speaking Christendom (although that would be nice), but in one of the traditions carried on by our Jewish friends. Before young boys or girls are officially brought into the faith, they are taught the language of their fathers. Perhaps we would be better served to once more return to the Greek texts in order to find out what the Bible *really* says (at least the New Testament, and I'm ignoring textual variations here), and perhaps part of the Confirmation process should be translating the Gospel of John from Greek into English. But since this isn't likely to happen anytime soon, perhaps all we can do is dream that one day we will all be "reading off the same page." Until then, we'll just have to make do with what best conveys the Word of God into our minds and into our hearts.

(The Rev.) Michael L. Ward, SSA
Rector
St. Mark's Church (Anglican)
Vero Beach, Florida

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The "linguistic destabilization" of which Richard John Neuhaus complains not only deprives Catholics of a common biblical language, it severs one generation from another and, in so doing, debilitates the Church's most powerful engine of evangelization. Since Vatican II, we have focused far too much attention upon "experts" and our ecclesial bureaucracy (both clerical and lay) as vehicles of evangelization and catechesis. We have paid far too little attention to the fact that the Catholic faith is, for the most part, lived in and passed on through families, through the "domestic churches." Most of us do not become Catholic because we read a magazine article or attended a debate or had a striking conversion experience; most of us remain Catholic because we remember how our grandmother taught us the Rosary, or how the family always celebrated our grandfather's saint's day, or how our mother so naturally resorted to St. Anthony to find a lost household item, or how our father, never saying a word about it, took us to Mass every single Sunday.

For us "cradle Catholics," i.e., for most Catholics, these devotional family ties, so much and so foolishly denigrated by ecclesiastical intellectuals, are the ties that bind. They have powerfully inducted us into the family of God, into the very household of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. By introducing supernatural realities into the comprehensible earthly context of our everyday lives, they explain such realities, not on an intellectual, verbal level, but on a deep, emotional level. Here, on this deeper level, is where the faith resides. Within this living context, nourished by the grace of the sacraments and by prayer, such a faith acquires the strength to survive doubt, persecution, and sin.

By destroying the continuity of biblical language over time, biblical translators deprive Catholic families of a scriptural idiom that resonates across generations and instead raise linguistic obstacles to the passing on of the faith within the domestic church. If one were to be cynical, one could say that it is in the experts' own interests to do so. Were scriptural language entrusted to all the faithful, and were families allowed to continue as the main evangelizers of Catholic children, then the means of evangelization and catechesis would remain dispersed. But in order for experts to control a process, in order for them to be able to reshape traditional teachings to make them more relevant to the passing fashions of each successive generation, that process must be centralized.

Joseph E. Rendini
Medford, Massachusetts

Miss Anscombe and Mr. Lewis

John M. Dolan's "G. E. M. Anscombe: Living the Truth" (May) was fascinating and informative. It also provided a profound example of how God nudges or jolts the responsive into the place and the work that He wants for them. Without his philosophical/theological "defeat" by Anscombe, combined with his own humble teachability, C. S. Lewis might have spent his life as just another competent academic philosopher/theologian. Instead, he became the inspired common sense interpreter of Jesus Christ to the nonscholarly. Hundreds of

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thousands of those who never heard of Anscombe, and many who never read Aristotle, Aquinas, Anselm, or Frege for themselves, read and were won over by Lewis.

For all her wonderful exposition of truth and living of that truth, perhaps Anscombe's greatest service to her Lord and to the human race was prompting Lewis into becoming the apostle to the nonacademic.

Dorothy T. Samuel
St. Cloud, Minnesota

More on Sydney Smith

You never know what improbable gem will pop out when you open up First Things. My favorite historical character who usually got things wrong was Sydney Smith, and I'm relieved to see that Richard John Neuhaus agrees with that opinion (While We're At It, May). When the House of Lords defeated the political reform bill of 1831, it was the bishops of the Church of England whose negative vote was decisive, a very unpopular position to have taken. Smith noted that "it was not safe for a clergyman to appear in the streets." Nine years later he recalled the incident in a letter: "The bishops never remained unpelted; they were pelted going, coming, riding, walking, consecrating, and carousing; the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the town of Canterbury, at the period of his visitation, was only saved from the mob by the dexterity of his coachman."

Herbert Schlossberg
Burke, Virginia

Church Weddings in Japan

Reading the comments of Richard John Neuhaus about Japanese "Christian-style" weddings (While We're At It, May) prompts me to offer another side to the story.

My wife is Japanese—she is from Kobe and belongs to a small Baptist church there. The pastor, who is an uncompromising sort, regularly gets requests to officiate at such ceremonies and as regularly rejects them. There was one particular case, however, where, to the scandal of his congregation, he insisted that he would officiate. He said that, while praying about it, he felt that God was prompting him in this case—a claim greeted with some skepticism by the independent-minded congregation. However, he went ahead, acted as minister, and made the small resources of the church available for the service. After this, the newly married couple found themselves more and more involved with the life of the church. Some twenty years later, the couple are both active Christians—in fact, the husband is now pastor of a sister Baptist church in Kobe.

Of course, this is not the usual outcome of a church wedding in Japan. Nevertheless, there are occasions where believing Japanese Christians cooperate with "the eclectic worship of kitsch" in order to evangelize.

Edward Curran
London, England

Briefly Read?

In addition to its obvious, intended meaning, the heading "Briefly Noted" (where my *Why Religion Matters* appears in the books section of FT, March) also means briefly read. The book's "main point is [not] to propose, against the innumerable 'spiritualities' with which we are culturally inundated, that ultimate wisdom and human flourishing are to be discovered in the historically grounded and communally normative religious traditions of the world." I touch on the way spirituality seems to be nosing out religion as a good word in my chapter on higher education and devote two pages to it in my closing chapter. That's all.

Paul Griffiths has me right when (in his June 1 *Commonweal* review of the book) he writes that "for Smith, our fundamental problem is . . . the scientism and materialism of modernity . . . which make it impossible for us to take seriously any non- or anti-materialistic Big Picture. As a result, we cannot be seriously religious—or at least, those in charge, the intellectuals and the media barons and the aggressively materialistic advocates of scientism, cannot be, and that means that serious religion is no part of our public life."

Thank you, Professor Griffiths, for setting the record straight.

Huston Smith
Berkeley, California

The Editors reply:
The reviewer says he should have written that the point about spirituality and religion is what was mainly of interest in the book.

In Defense of Critical Theory

"Never stay up on the barren heights of cleverness," Ludwig Wittgenstein advised, "but come down into the green valley of silliness (*Dummheit*)." Alas, so long as Richard John Neuhaus insists on dismissing Marxian-revisionary critical theory as "self-indulgent silliness" (While We're At It, May), he could do worse than to follow Wittgenstein's advice.

Indeed, if critical theory is a valley of *Dummheit* in Wittgenstein's sense, it is so, I submit, because its floor is rich with nourishing if bitter fruit: Max Horkheimer's *Critical Theory*, Theodor W. Adorno's *Aesthetic Theory*, Herbert Marcuse's *Soviet Marxism: A Critical Analysis*, Franz Neumann's *Behemoth: The Structure and Practice of National Socialism, 1933-1945*, Otto Kirkheimer's *Political Justice: The Use of Legal Procedure for Political Ends*, Jürgen Habermas' *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. As Wittgenstein also advised: "One must go down to the original sources so as to see them all side by side, both the neglected and the preferred."

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This Time

Evangelical and Catholic Together?

James Nuechterlein

Among the many (of course) excellent items in this issue, there is Ralph Wood's thoughtful and intelligent review of Mark Noll's latest book, *American Evangelical Christianity: An Introduction* (pp. 43-46). The review provides a discerning brief overview not only of the American evangelical past but of its present condition and future prospects. So astute an analysis disarms criticism, but, on reflection, two aspects of Professor Wood's argument strike me as subject to reservation, and those reservations seem of general enough application to deserve elaboration.

The first item involves mood rather than substance. First Things receives essays and reviews from evangelical intellectuals on a regular basis, and in virtually every case (I cannot offhand think of an example to the contrary) the dominant theme is one of lament. The title of Mark Noll's best-known book, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, reflects the characteristic habit of mind. Evangelical thinkers have a remarkable talent for self-criticism, and Prof. Wood's review, laudatory towards Noll's achievement but notably unenthusiastic in its appraisal of the current evangelical condition, is no exception. He is not entirely critical, but he is in no danger of being thought Pollyannish. If Wood and other intellectual leaders had their way, evangelicals would find no comfortable pews on Sunday mornings.

Why this is so I am not certain. Perhaps the recourse to the jeremiad is a conscious attempt to offset a certain mood of self-congratulation, or at least pious complacency, that is not unknown among rank-and-file evangelicals. One sometimes encounters there a style of humility that seems suspiciously like its opposite: "I'm deeply humbled, Lord, that you have chosen so unworthy a vessel to accomplish such great things for your Kingdom." (That form of aggrandizement-by-abasement is not, of course, restricted to evangelical expressions of Christianity.)

Be that as it may, the unrelenting insistence on self-criticism seems to me questionable. Christians necessarily worry about the sin of pride, and we all need periodic warnings against self-satisfaction. But successful churchmanship cannot consist solely of cautionary reminders of inadequacy. The Church is built, after all, on confidence in God's promises and assurance of His grace. Perhaps evangelical intellectuals think that their community of faith is so suffused with positive self-regard and so immune to self-doubt that it can only benefit from regular rehearsals of its limitations. And perhaps I am extrapolating improperly from my own experience within Lutheranism, where, I am convinced, persistent internal preoccupation with how awful everything is has had dispiriting and debilitating consequences.

But, as an outsider to evangelicalism, I do not see that its situation is so unsatisfactory as its in-house critics seem to suppose, and I cannot help thinking that the apparent alienation of those critics from its on-the-ground reality must, over time, do damage to its prospects. Are the internal critics, I sometimes wonder, so concerned for the good opinion of their colleagues in the academic theological guild that they distance themselves more than they really intend from those aspects of evangelical life that outsiders are inclined to disdain?

My second reservation proceeds from the first. Prof. Wood's basic criticism of evangelicalism is that it does not embrace as much as it should the theological and ecclesial virtues of other Christian bodies, especially those of the Catholic Church. He cites Rabbi Manfred Vogel's epigram—"While America has been good for Jews, it has been bad for Judaism"—and applies it to evangelicals. Evangelical Protestantism has benefited from liberal democracy's gift of political and religious freedom, but it has also been corrupted by liberal democracy's "church-subverting vices, especially its individualist and voluntarist notions" of religious life.

Protestants in general and evangelicals in particular have, in Prof. Wood's view, too uncritically aligned themselves with "the American political project." In so doing, they have risked the scandal "of muting the gospel's offensiveness, its necessary disjunction with all cultures and nations." Moreover, voluntarist assumptions have often led evangelicals "to violate the radically obediential and communal character of Christian faith."

The case of Billy Graham illustrates the evangelical dilemma. Prof. Wood notes Graham's great gifts and accomplishments, but he also addresses what he sees as his characteristically evangelical shortcomings, including "his virtual adulation of Ronald Reagan, his immunity to real religious doubt, and especially his decisionist and non-sacramental brand of revivalism."

Wood wants in general to infuse a more catholic (and Catholic) sensibility into evangelical piety. Evangelicals could do with more appreciation, he says, for

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the patristic tradition; they "need to recover the Church's witness during the first five centuries." He suggests that they also have to think more seriously "about authoritative ecclesial offices and social teachings," and he explicitly invokes Pope John Paul II as a model to be emulated.

One's instinctive reaction is to applaud Prof. Wood's admonitions. His analysis of evangelicalism's failings seems—at least to this non-evangelical observer—mostly on the mark. The problem is that his prescriptions call for, in effect, a squaring of the theological and ecclesial circle. He wants an evangelicalism that will encompass all the Christian virtues and avoid all Christian vices. But all systems of thought, religious and otherwise, are partial. They are also all package deals. Their distinctive strengths come together with distinctive weaknesses. Neither in theology nor anywhere else can we maximize all good things all at once.

Prof. Wood wants an evangelicalism that will be at once individual and communal, fully engaged with the culture and yet distinct from it, authentically Protestant and authentically Catholic. He wants, in short, an evangelicalism that will no longer be distinctively evangelical—even as he wants a Billy Graham who would no longer be Billy Graham. We cannot blend incommensurable qualities.

Evangelicalism has flourished in America, under peculiar American conditions, to a degree equaled nowhere else. In so flourishing, it has unavoidably absorbed elements from the culture that have not been entirely healthy. There have been trade-offs along the way, not all of them positive, but trade-offs are as common to Christian piety as they are to economic life. One cannot neatly categorize the impact of American democracy on American Christianity as either a Good Thing or a Bad Thing. It has been, as all such cultural interactions are, a Complicated Thing.

The pluralistic nature of the American Christian experience has been, in my view, a blessing, even if necessarily a mixed one. Our communities of faith have much to gain from continued mutual instruction and example. On many fronts, including the theological one, we can work beneficially with one another. But we cannot exchange fully our distinctive virtues.

Evangelicals and Catholics together? Of course. But not evangelical and Catholic at the same time. FT

Marsh Time

To age is but to respect gravity,
movement that is denial given up
in the fashion of prayer: on one's knees
and thankful perhaps to finally pause.

Even the cockroach, large and hard-backed, slows
as if to attract the descending heel,
letting perpetual generation
care for itself in the shadowy corner.

The arthritic cypress has no age,
never having been young, its gnarled grip
sufficient, and its fall unwitnessed,
the swamp collecting all of its debts.

Robert Parham

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Opinion

In Defense of Jabez

Philip Zaleski

"Read not the times, read the eternities," said Henry David Thoreau. It isn't often that the two realms intersect, but they have this year—and not only in the *New York Times*, but in news media across America—with the runaway success of Bruce Wilkinson's *The Prayer of Jabez: Breaking Through to the Blessed Life* (Multnomah, 2000). *The Prayer of Jabez*, as almost everyone knows by now, proclaims the blessings that derive from reciting an obscure prayer buried in a genealogical litany of, well, biblical proportions in the driest book in scripture, 1 Chronicles. The pertinent text, in the New King James Version favored by Wilkinson, reads:

> Now Jabez was more honorable than his brothers; and his mother called his name Jabez, saying, "Because I bore him in pain." And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, "Oh, that You would bless me indeed, and enlarge my territory, that Your hand would be with me, and that You would keep me from evil, that I may not cause pain!" So God granted him what he requested (1 Chronicles 4:9-10).

Wilkinson first recited the prayer as a young seminary student uncertain about his future. The results, he writes, "revolutionized my life," launching him on a thirty-year career as a minister and writer. They have also spawned a mini-industry of audiotapes, gift items, spin-off books (*The Prayer of Jabez Journal, The Prayer of Jabez for Teens*, etc.), and a website, www.prayerofjabez.com, packed with accounts of "miracles" by those rescued or revitalized by saying the prayer. One correspondent writes of the prayer's role in foiling a plane hijacking, another of using the prayer to comfort a child scared by a mouse.

The Prayer of Jabez is, if nothing else, an astute blend of literary archaeology, evangelical cheerleading, and attractive packaging. That Wilkinson brought the Jabez prayer to public attention is admirable enough; like Poe's purloined letter, it has been in plain sight for thousands of years, translated into hundreds of languages as a portion of the most widely read book in the world, and yet it has remained utterly invisible. Even the Church Fathers, exegetical Argonauts who explored the vast seas of the Old Testament inch-by-inch, overlooked it; I found not a single mention of it in the standard thirty-eight-volume Edinburgh edition of the Ante-Nicene, Nicene, and Post-Nicene Fathers.

Wilkinson has no interest in scholarly analysis; he uses each of the prayer's four petitions as a springboard for an affable, upbeat sermon whose key message is that God wishes to "release His miraculous power in your life now. And for all eternity, He will lavish on you His honor and delight." As the 7.4 million copies sold to date indicate, the public has rushed to accept this divine outpouring with opened arms and wallets.

The success of *The Prayer of Jabez* is the major publishing story of the year, testimony to our intense hunger for a fruitful relationship with God. But of equal interest, I believe, is the extensive (but by no means universal) condemnation of the book by the news media, the intelligentsia, and the professional theological community. Most of the objections take one of four basic forms:

Discomfort with evangelical religion. This is easy enough to spot. One sees it, for example, in the opening sentence of many of the news reports. Thus the *Washington Post* begins its story in mock-preacher style, asking readers to "Please bow your heads." The *New York Times Book Review*'s essay starts in similar fashion: "Our text today is *The Prayer of Jabez*." Such openings, blending condescension and wit, put the reader on notice: what follows should be read with one eyebrow arched. That the national media have a hard time with evangelical stories is scarcely a revelation, but it should be borne in mind when analyzing the widespread opposition to Wilkinson's book.

Discomfort with Wilkinson's style. Only those with a tin ear can defend Wilkinson's way with words; his prose is the stuff of billboards ("Friend, have you ever seen the Holy Spirit break through emotional and spiritual barriers right before your eyes?"), as pushy and gawky as a down-on-his-luck Bible salesman. But this is a sin against style, not against God; it says nothing about the efficacy of the Jabez prayer or the fundamental integrity of Wilkinson's message.

Discomfort with petitionary prayer. Here lies the heart of most assaults on *The Prayer of Jabez*. A number of liberal theologians object to the very notion of petitionary prayer, considering it to be a "low" form of prayer and contending that God, who is not given to caprice, has better things to do than cater to our transient whims. Moreover, the argument goes, petitionary prayer is

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redundant, as God already knows our most intimate needs and desires. The answer to these objections, of course, is that no less an authority than Jesus of Nazareth, when asked by his disciples, "Lord, teach us to pray," responded with a paradigmatic set of petitions, at least some of which ("give us this day our daily bread"; "deliver us from evil") bear comparison with the Jabez prayer. It's worth noting, too, that prayers of petition appear prominently in every religion (even nontheistic forms of Buddhism), for every religious community instinctively senses that such prayers have a legitimate place in worship and that they (sometimes) work.

Many critics, however, point their fingers not at petition in general, but squarely at the second clause of the Jabez prayer: "enlarge my territory." This request, especially in light of Wilkinson's rather ham-handed declaration that "if Jabez had worked on Wall Street, he might have prayed, 'Lord, increase the value of my investment portfolios,'" has raised the specter of Reverend Ike and his ilk; thus the *London Times* headline of May 10, "Please Lord, make me rich." Here theologians go for the knockout, declaring the Jabez prayer and its disciples to be crude, self-serving, and narcissistic.

But these punches miss the mark. Wilkinson emphasizes throughout his book that while praying the Jabez prayer we must want "nothing more and nothing less than what God wants for us." That is: "not my will, but Thine, be done" (Luke 22:42). In the book and on the website, the vast majority of answered prayers have nothing to do with personal aggrandizement and everything to do with bringing peace and goodwill to others, usually by spreading the gospel. We hear testimony, for example, from a worried mother who discovers that "enlarge my territory" means that her kids will accompany her to Sunday School. This entails, of course, a more-than-literal interpretation of "territory," which brings to mind those Church Fathers mentioned above. Surely, if they had noticed the prayer of Jabez, they would have offered allegorical, analogical, and symbolic interpretations in addition to a literal reading; they too might have argued that "enlarge my territory," especially when voiced by an "honorable" man such as Jabez, meant "enlarge the glory of God."

As for those few who recite the Jabez prayer, or any prayer, out of selfish motives, one trusts that if the prayer is unworthy, God will not answer it. One also prays that those who ask blessings for themselves will do the same for their neighbors. It should be noted, however, that the impulse to ask God for help—for success on a school test, a marriage proposal, a commercial venture—is natural, healthy, and hardly limited to our reportedly narcissistic culture. Consider, for example, this prayer for success in gathering seaweed, collected in the nineteenth century on a remote Scottish isle by the peripatetic anthropologist Alexander Carmichael and included in his *Carmina Gadelica*:

> The people watch and hope and pray for the coming of seaweed, and are anxious at the prospect of impending famine. When the seaweed comes they rejoice and sing hymns of praise to the gracious God of the sea who has heard their prayers:
>
> *Seaweed being cast on shore,*
> *Bestow, Thou Being of bestowal;*
> *Produce being brought to wealth,*
> *O Christ, grant me my share!*

Discomfort with the promised results of the prayer. Few commentators have addressed this issue, and yet I believe it is the only serious objection to *The Prayer of Jabez*. "God really does have unclaimed blessings waiting for you," writes Wilkinson, and few who believe in God and His love for mankind will disagree. But what sort of blessings? Christianity teaches that our final destiny is holiness: "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). This perfection is not won without suffering and sacrifice, as the testimony of two thousand years of saintly attainment bears witness. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* puts it succinctly: "There is no holiness without renunciation and spiritual battle. Spiritual progress entails the ascesis and mortification that gradually lead to living in the peace and joy of the Beatitudes."

The Prayer of Jabez hints at the mysterious value of suffering, for instance in Wilkinson's warnings against spiritual pride, but the message is never spelled out. The abiding assumption seems to be that "blessings" means worldly wealth and happiness, albeit in the service of God. But who would hogtie the Almighty in this way? Every spring the Church celebrates the feast day of Justin Martyr, whose very name proclaims the redemptive suffering bestowed by God. Blessings, it seems, can come in many forms. The Bible doesn't tell us if Jabez had undergone a similar trial of suffering and self-sacrifice, but curiously enough, his name, like Justin's, strongly suggests it. A number of scholars have pointed out that Jabez (*y'btz*) is a play on *b'tzb*, the Hebrew word for pain. As Sara Japhet unpacks the prayer in her *I & II Chronicles: A Commentary* (1993), the boy's given name was actually Jazeb, which his mother distorted in "an intentional mispronunciation . . . as an urgent plea to God to avert the name's inherent dangers."

Thus Jabez, a man whose adopted name constitutes in itself a petitionary prayer and who, despite the affliction of his accursed birth-name, grows "more honorable than his brothers"—that is to say, closer to holiness. By what means could Jabez's virtue have grown, if not by the

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inevitable path of the saints? God has blessed Jabez and granted him his prayer, but this blessing must have entailed genuine metanoia, with its concomitant suffering. As Kierkegaard reminds us, "Prayer does not change God, but it changes him who prays." So, too, I suspect, the Jabez prayer may change us all, in ways easy or hard to swallow, but always to the greater glory of God.

PHILIP ZALESKI *is currently writing, with his wife Carol Zaleski,* The Language of Paradise: Prayer in Human Life and Culture, *to be published by Houghton Mifflin in 2003.*

Good News from the Court

Douglas W. Kmiec

Good News v. Milford is very good news indeed for advocates of school vouchers and faith-based organizations (FBOs). The Supreme Court's 6-3 decision upholding the right of a Christian youth group to meet in public schools after class hours is a significant signal of the Court's willingness to treat religious organizations and viewpoints on an evenhanded basis.

In 1992, Milford Central School in New York State enacted a community use policy outlining purposes for which its building could be used after school. Under the policy, district residents could use the school for "instruction in any branch of education, learning, or the arts." The school was also to be made available for "social, civic, and recreational meetings and entertainment events, and other uses pertaining to the welfare of the community, provided that such uses shall be nonexclusive and shall be opened to the general public." Several district residents who sponsored the local Good News Club—a private, voluntary Christian organization for children ages six to twelve—submitted a request to the interim superintendent of the district, seeking to hold the Club's weekly after-school meetings in the school cafeteria. They were excluded, however, because their proposed use—to have "a fun time of singing songs, hearing a Bible lesson, and memorizing Scripture"—was "the equivalent of religious worship." The school authorities claimed that such a meeting was prohibited by the rules that forbid the school from being used "by any individual or organization for religious purposes."

The Court, per Justice Clarence Thomas, found Milford to have created a limited public forum—in essence, a standing invitation to use public property for the designated purposes. When the state establishes a limited public forum, the state is not required to and does not allow persons to engage in every type of speech. However, said the Court, the state's power to restrict speech is not without limits. Such restriction must not discriminate against speech on the basis of viewpoint, and the restriction must be "reasonable in light of the purpose served by the forum."

Relying upon two earlier but more narrowly written opinions, the Court found the school district to have discriminated against the proposed religious speech in *Good News.* In *Lamb's Chapel v. Center Moriches* (1993), the Justices held that a school district violated the Free Speech Clause of the First Amendment when it excluded a private group from presenting films at the school based solely on the films' discussions of family values from a religious perspective. Likewise, in *Rosenberger v. Rector* (1995), the Court held that a university's refusal to fund a student publication because the publication addressed issues from a religious viewpoint violated the Free Speech Clause. The majority concluded that Milford's exclusion of the Good News Club based on its religious nature was indistinguishable from the exclusions in these cases, and held that it constituted viewpoint discrimination.

The result in *Good News* is significant for what the Court refused to do: namely, indulge the notion that some protected religious speech is "too religious." The Court expressly disagreed with the idea that something that is "quintessentially religious" or "decidedly religious in nature" cannot also be characterized properly as the teaching of morals and character development from a particular viewpoint. Said the Court: "What matters for purposes of the Free Speech Clause is that we can see no logical difference in kind between the invocation of Christianity by the Club and the invocation of teamwork, loyalty, or patriotism by other associations to provide a foundation for their lessons."

Federal judges are expected to play many roles, but attempting to differentiate between religiously informed moral instruction and unambiguously religious practice or instruction is not comfortably one of them. Indeed, even contemplating such distinctions is theologically perilous, for while some religions treat ethics and religion as distinct subjects, the adherents of many mainstream religions of the West (including Judaism and Christianity) hold ethics and religion to be inseparable. The lower court had presupposed that morality is independent from divine will, but that is not so for many believers. Indeed, had the Supreme Court not disavowed that specious notion, it would have rightly been seen as improperly taking sides over religious doctrine.

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Milford argued that, even if its restriction constitutes viewpoint discrimination, its interest in not violating the Establishment Clause outweighed the Club's interest in gaining equal access to the school's facilities. Melding Justice Thomas' neutral or equal access ideas from *Mitchell v. Helms* (2000) (upholding the nondiscriminatory allocation of educational resources such as computers to religious and public schools alike) with Justice Sandra Day O'Connor's long-standing sensitivity to improper endorsement and Justice Anthony Kennedy's similar attention to tacit coercion in such school prayer cases as *Lee v. Weisman* (1992), the Court found no Establishment Clause violation in *Good News*.

Factually, the Court noted that the Club's meetings were held after school hours, were not sponsored by the school, and were open to any student who obtained parental consent, not just to Club members. Moreover, the objection that the Club was aimed at elementary school children was deemed unpersuasive, since from the endorsement perspective, "the relevant community would be the parents, not the elementary school children." Reasoned the Court: "Because the children cannot attend without their parents' permission, they cannot be coerced into engaging in the Good News Club's religious activities. Milford does not suggest that the parents of elementary school children would be confused about whether the school was endorsing religion. Nor do we believe that such an argument could be reasonably advanced."

Good News v. Milford is especially welcome news for supporters of school vouchers and government funding of faith-based organizations. A majority of the Court now affirms that when "aid is offered to a broad range of groups or persons without regard to their religion" there can be no violation of the separation of church and state. Surely, lawmakers sympathetic to President Bush's effort to construct expanded opportunities for FBOs should highlight this principle. Yet as of this writing, they appear not to have fully digested these legal developments.

In the bill currently on its way to the Senate, FBOs would be allowed to keep names, charters, and symbols, but *not* to offer religious services, prayer, or preaching as part of government-funded social service programs. But this is exactly the kind of distinction *rejected* in *Good News*, and it should not be bootstrapped into federal law. If individuals are free not to pursue assistance from a religious provider, there is no reason to impose costly and cumbersome requirements to keep the spiritually effective elements of a program administratively separate from the secular ones.

Certainly, *Mitchell* and *Good News* suggest that the absolute prohibition of "pervasively sectarian" institutions is no longer valid. Such categorical discrimination against religious entities has now twice been described by the Court as a product of the anti-immigrant (viz., anti-Catholic and anti-Jewish) bias of an earlier period of American history. Indeed, for the last two decades, the Court has been evolving from an inconsistent (and often incoherent) prohibition of aid or benefits flowing to religious organizations (secular books, okay, but not maps) to an examination of whether the aid or benefit was used for religious purposes to an equality of distrubution inquiry without unnecessary concern for how the benefit may be used. All this makes good sense. As long as private choice is at the core of the decision, it matters not whether our tax-deductible church plate contributions are used to supply either bodily or spiritual food for the needy; so, too, it matters not if public resources—be they computers or classrooms—are privately allocated within a neutrally designed, evenhanded program to the character instruction of Christ's witness or the Boy Scout handbook.

This is precisely why the FBO structure recently adopted by the House is flawed—it slights private choice in favor of funding FBOs directly by the U.S. Treasury. As noted above, the Court has moved away from using the Establishment Clause to invalidate monies disbursed evenhandedly to a broad range of competing groups, religious and nonreligious alike, but why invite trouble by having disbursement come from R. Barry Bureaucrat, rather than John Q. Public? It is likely this direct delivery of funds that explains the House's unfortunate censorship of FBOs, which itself is constitutionally dubious. And whether or not it is, it certainly invites all kinds of burdensome federal auditing and entanglement, along with subtle pressures on churches to modify their teachings as an implied grant condition.

The way out of this morass is not to abandon the creative social service potential of FBOs, but rather to fund them indirectly. Simply allowing taxpayers an enhanced tax credit for donations to the FBO of their choice would eliminate any residual church-state questions. The House measure appropriately expanded deductibility for charitable giving in general. The Senate should complete this work by providing a credit specifically for FBO donations.

The case for school vouchers is also strengthened by *Good News*. The Court is presently being petitioned to review the constitutionality of a school voucher or scholarship program that makes taxpayer education funds available to low-income families seeking to avoid the troubled Cleveland schools. Contrary to favorable voucher rulings in Wisconsin, Arizona, and Illinois, the lower federal courts struck down the Cleveland program because the public schools refused to actively participate in the voucher program, even though the law authorized them to do so. The absence of public par-

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ticipants troubled the lower courts, since it effectively meant that only private religious schools received vouchers in Cleveland. An important side note in the *Good News* decision suggests that this should make no difference. The Court observed that when a public benefit is offered for actual use "by groups presenting any viewpoint, [the Court] would not find an Establishment Clause violation simply because only groups presenting a religious viewpoint have opted to take advantage of the [benefit] at a particular time."

In other words, the fact that only private religious schools have cared enough about the educational fortunes of the least advantaged children cannot be used against them. After all, the law should not be structured so that there is a preferential option against the poor.

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The Names of Love

David K. O'Connor

Plato was no friend of safe sex, and latex would not have changed his mind. In his great erotic dialogues, the *Symposium* and the *Phaedrus*, Plato's love is like C. S. Lewis' divine lion, Aslan, who though very good is certainly not tame. The erotic desire beauty provokes, Plato tells us, is the path to madness, not to the security and dull reasonableness of the prudent. We slander love and the gods who bring that desire when we refuse its transfigurations and ecstasies. Control and the dear old self: these are not gods, but their idols of clay.

Every love is a giving birth, a conception that takes lover and beloved beyond themselves into an undiscovered country, a procreation. Love is always emigrant. The Platonic lover muses on the beloved, doting to idolatry over this image and likeness of God. It is union above all duty. Why teach ourselves to hope for less? But in truth we shy from using these sacred names, as much from human fear as holy awe. Ralph Waldo Emerson, the new world's greatest Platonist, understood our reticence. "We but half express ourselves," he wrote, "and are ashamed of that divine idea which each of us represents." To own the mad aspirations of Plato's fertile love is to risk a charge of public intoxication in this our sober age, which usurps the name of temperance, but shows itself to favor prohibition. Its representative would be T. S. Eliot's Prufrock, whose hundred indecisions and revisions are but poor shelters from the overwhelming questions and indefinite answers of love. Love has no safe harbors, only interminable oceans. It must dare disturb the universe, and it will search out the expressions it needs for its work.

But where do we find ourselves? Erotic lethargy is the master tone of the age. Like Mark Antony by Caesar, we are dispossessed of our erotic estate by mere administrators, and the angels of love fold up their wings affrighted and overpowered. Our genius is fled, since love cannot be found measured and reckoned like so many spoons of coffee. "The limits of my language are the limits of my world," said Ludwig Wittgenstein, one of the great philosophers of the last century. Our mother tongue feels her limits, and stammers and scolds when she tries to speak of love.

The present contractions of our erotic language are painful to behold, and God knows what rough beasts are waiting to be born. Hardheaded realism is the mask worn in our time by hard-hearted cynicism. Emerson saw it coming, this world where our experience refuses all the expressions of idealism. So we keep the high things of the world outside, the better to keep our petty inside secure and tranquilized. "The dearest events are summer-rain, and we the Para coats that shed every drop." Now sex itself is like the weather, and the law of erotic prudence is always to have at hand one's slicker.

Scholars and poets are nature's victims of expression. We wax and wane with the language. Every word chagrins us, and we blush from inarticulacy. The most common word we mouth to describe the conjugal embrace is as old as English, our four-letter friend derived from a Dutch root, *fokken*, having to do with breeding cattle. (So much for romance.) What is common comes to lose its savor, and in the end is good for nothing but to be thrown in the street and trampled underfoot. When I was a boy four decades ago, the word at least retained a certain vulgar potency, even when voiced only among other boys—it was unthinkable to say it in front of girls, and it was uttered in front of adults only for the most extreme of purposes. It meant something then, something about crossing a line or refusing to feign innocence. We could wear it as an impudent badge of adolescent knowingness. But forty years of trampling have made it in truth what the *Oxford English Dictionary* says it has been for a century, a "meaningless intensifier." The limits of this erotic world are common indeed.

One wonders if the century has made a meaningless intensifier not only of the name, but of the action named as well. On college campuses, the genius of language has found the name "hook-up" for an evanescent sexual entanglement, especially when catalyzed by artificial intoxicants. The word is meant, like its precursors "affair" and "fling," to carry the holiday in its eye, a spirit of roving adventure. I find the associa-

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tion with travel real enough, but the name loses some of its enchantment in my local habitation. Where I live in Indiana, roving is associated with recreational vehicles, those massive motor homes of camping enthusiasts. This vehicular lifestyle depends on transient resting places where the mighty rovers can dump their waste, and campsites with accommodating plumbing advertise the provision of "hook-ups." Perhaps this connotation of "hook-up" is the Hoosier version of William Faulkner's pithy description of uncaring sex as finding "an evening's spittoon." One does not dote on a hook-up.

But when we try to ascend from the common to the public, do we fare better? The phrase "sexual intercourse," and the use of the word "sex" to cover not just the fact of male and female, but what we (though not our former President) call "sex acts," are also hardly a century old. At the very moment our Dutch word left the confines of the erotic and became a general term of excitement or abuse, the vacuum was filled with words more at home in a hospital than the nuptial chamber. Our talk of love came under the severe influence of the public health authorities. The nuptial meaning of the body, to use a phrase of Pope John Paul II's, all but disappears.

This medical turn in our language made public speech about the erotic possible by sanitizing it, like chlorine in so much sewage. It was the beginning of the movement toward safe sex, a prophylactic of the tongue. "Sexual intercourse" comes from the same region of the language native to various sorts of -ectomies and -oscopies. It does not sound like something for which one would cross the hall, let alone the world. "I'm sorry, I can't meet you for lunch today; I have to go to the medical center for a sexual intercourse." My favorite illustration of where this way of talking takes us is the phrase "sexually active." It seems to be modeled on "radioactive": the "sexually active" teenager is an isotope with a short half-life, spewing particles of sexuality that threaten to cause beta decay in the surrounding atoms.

The metallic aftertaste of words medical and the impudent tastelessness of words adolescent make every choice unpalatable. They cannot speak to our erotic desires. Here even a good Christian might long to be a pagan. How like finding fresh water it is to read in Plato that Eros is a great god, and to speak of love with the sacred names of Dionysus, god of wine, and Aphrodite, goddess of beauty. We have Plato's testimony that every one of us—male and female, free and slave, gentile and Jew—is pregnant, and erotic desire is our surest sign that the gods will have us give birth.

Our poor tongue seems to cover itself in shame when confronted with this erotic theophany. The earth-bound scholars will try to dispirit us with their malicious insinuation that the Greek word *aphrodisia*, "the things of Aphrodite," is merely another way of saying "sexual intercourse." The fact and the inference are not to be trusted. One might as well say the Church's word for "cup" is "chalice," and confuse a mundane instrument of profane life with the container for a bloody yet nourishing god. What conceptions do the scholars attach to love, what to religion! One would not willingly pronounce these words in their hearing, and give them the occasion to profane them with their knowingness. The art of love has a pudency, and will not be exposed. Nietzsche was right to say Eros has been poisoned into degeneracy, but he misidentified the poisoners. It is the intellectuals, not the Christians, who have drugged Eros with a contraceptive of the mind.

In our time, the Catholic Church has done more than anyone else to keep visible this divine aspect of sexuality. I do not claim she has done enough. The tongue remains a most erotic organ, but our language labors to make itself heard over the sniggers of boys with dirty pictures and the cold clatter of doctors with their instruments. We need love-intoxicated Christian poets to find new heaven, new earth, new words. "The conjugal embrace," "the nuptial meaning of the body," cannot for most of us be the cadences of our native place. They are the quaint idioms of Vaticanese, the foreign speech of a land where we may visit, but do not live.

It is an honest response to bide one's time and bite one's tongue, until the weather clears and new work can be done. As Wittgenstein said, "Whereof we cannot speak, thereof we must be silent." But there is a risk in waiting, too. If I bite my tongue too often, I may lose the power of speech altogether. And then where will I be? Nowhere to be found.

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Letter From Ukraine

Andriy Chirovsky

There is one remaining institution of the old Tsarist empire of the Romanovs: the Patriarchate of Moscow. It is the only such institution to survive the bloody upheavals of the Russian Revolution, which led to the expansion of Russian imperial holdings but also to a loss of most of its tradition. All that remains is the

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Moscow Patriarchate, which in Soviet times was the closest thing to an established church in an officially atheist state. Today it is the Russian imperialist's last hope for a restitution of the old empire—even a smaller, Slavic empire of three fraternal nations, Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine. Of course, Russia would have to be—in Orwellian terms—more fraternal than the rest, but that is the way it is with all empires. That this last empire would never come to be was pretty much apparent by the end of the visit of Pope John Paul II to Ukraine, June 24-27, 2001.

Thanks to the relentless efforts of the enormous KGB-trained Department of External Affairs of the Moscow Patriarchate, under the leadership of the old Estonian KGB's decorated "agent Drozdov," a.k.a. Patriarch Alexei II, the world media was alerted to what was to be the Pope's most controversial and potentially ugliest visit to any country thus far. In Goebbels-like fashion, the articles from paid or simply lazy drones in the press came churning out systematically. One influential media outlet per week—different every week—spread the universal message: Pope John Paul may not set foot on the soil of Ukraine, despite the invitation of its government and the bishops of both the Ukrainian and Roman Rite Catholic Churches, with their flocks of nearly six million people.

Demonstrations were organized—pitiful, little demonstrations, but with icons, beards, and incense, they certainly made for a good visual and thus made the editor's cut for the news. The demonstrations were organized and attended by members of three groups: the faction of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church loyal to the Moscow Patriarchate; the movement to unite Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia; and the Communist Party. At first glance the third seems "not like the others," as Sesame Street might say. But in reality they were very much alike. All three would like to see the return of one state with one closely allied church, just like the good old days.

That is where the Moscow Patriarchate lost touch with reality and its faithful. Only one-half of 1 percent of the Ukrainian population was adamantly opposed to the papal visit. In the aftermath of the pontiff's trip to Ukraine sixty-five percent of Russia's population wanted a papal visit of their own, with only 17 percent describing themselves as opposed. Patriarch Alexei's dire predictions only offered the mass media the opportunity to witness and report on a remarkably warm and successful papal pilgrimage. Some journalists, in their perpetually Russocentric obsession, asked repeatedly: What is the meaning of the visit to Ukraine? Does it signal the end of John Paul's hopes to visit Russia? Is Ukraine merely a consolation prize? They could not see the obvious. The Catholic Church of Kyiv (otherwise known, by an ethnic and therefore less proper name, as the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church) was for half a century (1946-1990) the world's largest banned religious body. Not that many people noticed this fact, since the world knows precious little of Ukraine and even less of the largest of the Eastern Catholic Churches (those Orthodox Churches that are in full and visible communion with Rome), the Catholic Church of Kyiv.

This Catholic Church of Kyiv looks to the Vatican City State as a kind of guarantee that the Catholic Church will not become a servant of the state, as the Moscow Patriarchate has clearly done, from the times of the Tsars through the rule of the commissars and still today. June's papal visit underlined this fact in a strange way. In order to appease those Orthodox who followed Alexei's warnings about the nefarious intentions of the Pope—who, it was said, was out to steal sheep away from Moscow's Church in Ukraine—the entire trip was billed as the State Visit of the Head of State of the Vatican, that quaint little country whose army is gaily attired in uniforms by Michelangelo, armed with the latest in pike-style weapons.

Yet that the Pope is the citizen of no country, the subject of no earthly ruler, is precisely what Ukrainian Catholics were willing to suffer and die for in Siberia. The recent beatification of twenty-six martyrs only solidified the long-standing belief that the Church should remain beyond government control.

Not one Ukrainian Greco-Catholic bishop was willing to cooperate with the secret police and join the Moscow Patriarchate, though they were asked to do so repeatedly. Most died, either in prison or as a result of their tortures. The patriarch of this Church, Josyf Cardinal Slipyj, was released by the Soviets in a deal brokered by journalist Norman Cousins between John F. Kennedy, Pope John XXIII, and Nikita Khrushchev, shortly after the Cuban missile crisis. Expected to die soon, after suffering eighteen years in Siberian concentration camps, he stubbornly lived on for twenty-one years, dying a scant five years before his Church came out of the underground not in the thousands but in the millions, to the utter surprise of the Moscow Patriarchate, the Vatican, the KGB, and the CIA.

There were martyrs of Nazi oppression as well. Even though the Germans struck a less barbaric pose at first and may have confused some Ukrainian Catholics who had been suffering under Bolshevik oppression, the Church soon saw things as they were. Metropolitan Andrey Sheptytsky used his residences and monasteries to save Jews from extermination and wrote a courageous letter to Himmler condemning the slaughter, while most of German-occupied Europe remained anxiously silent. He also wrote a pastoral letter entitled "Thou Shalt Not Kill," in which he threatened with excommunication any of his flock who took part in the

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genocide. Among those recently beatified was a priest who took his bishop's orders seriously and was murdered by the Nazis for it. Sheptytsky himself was honored by the Pope repeatedly, but his beatification requires the detailed examination of his voluminous archives from forty-four years at the helm of the Church.

Today that Church has the most ambitious theological school in the country, the L'viv Theological Academy, whose Harvard-trained rector, Father Borys Gudziak, asked John Paul to bless its cornerstone, its students, its faculty, its buildings, and its future. Outside of Ukraine, the Church is represented in nine dioceses in North America, with bishops in South America, Australia, Western Europe, and Poland. It has the only doctoral program in Eastern Christian Studies in the Western hemisphere at its Sheptytsky Institute in Ottawa, which already works ecumenically and is poised to expand its services to Eastern Catholics and Orthodox as well in an ecumenical vision taken from its own intrepid leaders and echoed by the Bishop of Rome.

Education is the priority of a new generation of self-starting leaders who push for authentic catechesis and place the highest demands on theological students. Armed with thorough knowledge of classical and modern languages, alumni of the L'viv Theological Academy are among the best educated university graduates in Ukraine. Through a strange twist in post-Soviet history, the government of Ukraine has not yet recognized theology as a university discipline, depriving those highly qualified young people of job opportunities and basic benefits accruing to university graduates. The Pope made sure to emphasize the need to rectify this situation. In a wily move, Fr. Gudziak welcomed President Leonid Kuchma to the Pope's last and best attended service (over one million came to the Byzantine Liturgy in L'viv) by asking the crowd to thank the president for his openness on the issue of accrediting theological studies. A cheer went up and saved the president from embarrassment. Most of those present would have preferred to boo him on worldwide television. We'll see if he follows through on the Pope's suggestion.

This Church is no creation of counter-reformation missionaries out to convert unsuspecting Orthodox, as Moscow would have one believe, and as is the case with some Eastern Catholic Churches. Its Orthodox bishops chose in Orthodox synodal fashion to end the schism with Rome in 1596. Sometimes let down and sometimes saved by Rome, this Church takes no one's help for granted, though it deserves the help of those who believe the Church has a vital role to play in the public forum, without becoming subservient to the state. This feisty attitude is directed not only to foreign occupiers, but to the Ukrainian state as well. One of the country's most outspoken critics of President Kuchma and the corruption in his government is His Beatitude Lubomyr Cardinal Husar, the patriarch of the Ukrainian Greco-Catholic Church.

The title "patriarch" still appears in lower case, because Rome and other Eastern Catholic Patriarchates have not yet recognized the title officially. Many wonder why such an archaic title is of such vital interest to this Church, which has so much else to occupy its time and interest. The answer is quite simple. A Major Archbishopric (the current acknowledged category for this Church) can be swallowed up by a patriarchate, while a patriarchate cannot. With the neighboring Patriarchate of Moscow still occupying some of the church buildings taken away from the Ukrainian Greco-Catholics by Stalin and given to Moscow in the 1940s, fears of Moscow's voracious ecclesiastical appetite are not unfounded. Of course, the Church's spokesmen emphasize that the largest of the Eastern Catholic Churches should be granted full status and recognition. At the Byzantine Liturgy in L'viv on June 27, the clergy and the faithful let the Pope know their hopes. As Cardinal Husar approached the altar, they chanted exuberantly: "Patriarch, Patriarch!"

While the fear of being swallowed up by a caesaropapist neighbor persists, the Catholic Church of Kyiv is nevertheless decidedly ecumenical in its vision. This Church seeks double communion—with Rome and Constantinople—and will gladly unite with the Ukrainian Orthodox if they will accept a similar arrangement, allowing the Orthodox Synod to choose the one patriarch of a united church. The bigger problem seems to be to get the Orthodox in Ukraine, now split into three major factions, to unite among themselves. The Patriarch of Constantinople, who has never accepted the unilateral forced subordination of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church to Moscow in 1686, has tremendous interest in these developments. Moscow's claim that autocephaly or ecclesiastical self-rule can be granted only by Moscow, as Kyiv's Mother Church, is specious, since Moscow received Christianity from Kyivan missionaries two hundred years *after* Kyiv accepted the faith from Constantinople. The Moscow Church cannot be its mother's mother.

It is ironic that those who accepted union with Rome in 1596 were depicted by Ukrainian freedom-fighting Cossacks (not to be confused with the Tsar's later pogrom-bearing elite troops) as having sold out to Polish overlords. Within ninety years, the relatively autonomous Ukrainian Orthodox who rejected union with Rome would be reduced to an ever smaller role in the Russian Church. By the early twentieth century, all its bishops would be carefully chosen Russians or Russophiles, so that proponents of an independent Ukrainian Orthodox Church could not find a single hierarch

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to head it and had to follow untraditional means of establishing an episcopate, which left it outside the orbit of canonical Orthodox Churches.

It is thus even more ironic that during John Paul's visit to Ukraine, representatives of the descendants of the Ukrainian Cossacks presented the pontiff with greetings and a gift at the Byzantine-rite liturgy in L'viv. The Ukrainian Cossacks slaughtered Roman Catholics and Greco-Catholics, whom they called the hated "uniates," but it was Pope John Paul II and Lubomyr Cardinal Husar who did the apologizing for dark moments in history, to the fury of those who think this Pope apologizes entirely too often, for entirely too much. But asking for forgiveness is a powerful weapon. It disarms the attacker and makes it difficult, or at least in bad taste, to hate. It is an entirely different thing to demand an apology, as Patriarch Alexei II recently did, when he demanded that the Pope atone for his visit to Ukraine. As the *Kyiv Post* noted recently, if there are any converts from Russian Orthodoxy in the wake of John Paul's visit to Ukraine, they will not be due to any proselytizing by the pontiff, but rather to the incredibly negative vituperations of the Moscow Patriarchate.

There is one other thing that won the hearts of many Ukrainians—one that the Moscow Patriarchate is incapable of understanding. The Pope spoke Ukrainian—very good Ukrainian—in most of his allocutions. No Patriarch of Moscow, despite claiming that Ukraine is his pastoral territory, has ever spoken Ukrainian to the Ukrainian people. Unless the Patriarch is completely incapable of seeing beyond colonial dreams, he will have to catch up soon. Both Poles and Russians bought and sold Ukrainian serfs until the mid-nineteenth century and considered Ukrainian unfit to be called a language, but this Polish Pope has been speaking Ukrainian for the last twenty years and he talked up a storm of it during his visit.

Despite a government that is manifestly corrupt—in which oligarchs make off with obscene amounts of money and the average small businessman must pay protection to the Mafia throughout Ukraine—President Kuchma has been successful on two fronts: minority rights have been protected and religious and ethnic hostilities have been kept at bay. He desperately needed the Pope's visit to bring some good press to his government. But that did not stop the Pope from reminding political, business, and cultural elites that they must put human dignity before the lining of their pockets. He also appealed to youth—three hundred thousand of whom braved torrential rains to see him—not to trade the slavery of communism for an enslavement by consumerism. He begged them not to seek the illusion of an easy life abroad, but to stay at home and help build a bright future for Ukraine. I asked a twenty-something taxi driver how he felt about the Pope's remarks. "I'm walking half a meter off the earth, and giddy as a child," he replied.

Ukraine will need a lot of dedicated young people to transform itself into the prosperous country it could be. With a highly educated and extremely resourceful populace and much natural wealth, the largest entirely European country could emerge from the shadows in which it was hidden for centuries by foreign powers to be a formidable force. Unlike the industrialized powers of the West, Ukraine's isolation from the nihilism of twentieth-century Western elites may make it a paradigm for a new type of modern state: one with a Christian soul. Vocations are plentiful. There is incredible potential among dedicated lay believers who want to make a difference. Can the *homo Sovieticus* now ruling at national, regional, and local levels produce a new leadership class to seize the potential? The normally cynical people who were "walking half a meter off the earth" days after the Pope's departure will tell you: Ukraine has plenty of surprises left.

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America Fifty/Fifty

James L. Guth, Lyman A. Kellstedt, John C. Green & Corwin E. Smidt

G. K. Chesterton's famous description of the United States as "a nation with the soul of a church" was never more apt than during the 2000 presidential campaign. Religion was in the limelight from the moment that George W. Bush named Jesus as his favorite political philosopher to the day when Joseph Lieberman joined the Democratic ticket, quoting the Book of Chronicles. And when it was all over, Bush entered office amidst a flurry of worship services, clerical blessings, and religious consultations.

The pervasive religiosity of the campaign helped produce one of the closest and most controversial elections in history. America seemed to have two souls—or one torn in half. Experienced observers from journalist Thomas Edsall to social thinker Francis Fukuyama saw in the results a massive cultural divide. Newspapers produced brightly colored maps limning the political boundaries between the rustic heartland and cosmopolitan urban centers. The sharpest differences between the official party platforms were on cultural matters, from abortion to school vouchers, and religious groups campaigned vigorously for their respective champions. In the end, cultural disputes and widespread dismay over the country's moral state overshadowed the economic optimism that was expected to put Al Gore in the White House, allowing Bush to eke out a victory.

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Despite the precarious electoral margin, the public was not as bitterly divided as the pundits thought. Even some deeply religious voters were only vaguely conscious of the stark cultural differences evoked by the campaign. And only about one-half of the eligible electorate even bothered to vote. Alan Wolfe might easily have seen "one nation after all," albeit one strangely aloof from the struggle for its soul. Indeed, many citizens were thoroughly disengaged from public affairs—or, to paraphrase Robert Putnam, they were bowling alone and abstaining together. The candidates seemed to sense this civic malaise and drew up alternative blueprints for rebuilding civil society: Gore proposed a revitalized public sector, and Bush a reenergized private one.

All these tendencies converged in a "50 percent solution": half the people voted, and half of those backed each major candidate. (See table, p. 21.) More fundamentally, the outcome revealed the consolidation of a new religious order in American politics, an altered relationship between faith and public affairs.

Throughout American history, voting has been shaped by ethnoreligious loyalties in which distinct religious traditions, often wedded to ethnic and racial identities, exhibited characteristic partisan ties. Such connections reflected the special culture of each tradition, formed in local neighborhoods and churches, engendering both ideological commonalities within the tradition and persistent social conflict with other traditions. In the mid-twentieth century, for example, mainline Protestants supplied most of the Republican Party's leaders and its most faithful voters, while Catholics, Jews, and other religious minorities—including regional outgroups such as southern evangelicals—constituted the

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bedrock of the Democratic Party. These alignments survived even the class politics of the New Deal.

Since the 1960s, however, these attachments have been transformed by three critical developments. First, some religious traditions have shifted their partisan loyalties. White evangelicals, for example, abandoned the Democrats for the GOP in droves, while African-American Protestants finally deserted the party of Lincoln, becoming monolithically Democratic. And many Catholics strayed from their ancient Democratic home, with some joining the Republicans but others becoming swing voters available to either party under the right circumstances. Evangelicals and black Protestants are now prominent among the elites of their respective parties, and Catholics are leaders in both. Such shifts have been a staple of electoral politics, reflecting the political values of the special cultures of religious traditions. This revised version of the old ethnoreligious politics is still taken for granted, although it is not often seen as particularly religious. Even polls sponsored by the religiously tone-deaf *New York Times* routinely distinguish the political behavior of "white Protestants," "Catholics," and "Jews."

More recently, a new kind of partisan divide has opened, based on conflict within religious communities over belief, practice, and the role of religion in society. By the 1980s disputes pitting "traditionalists" of many stripes against a variety of "modernists" had partially restructured the larger American religious traditions, modifying their distinctive cultures. Traditionalists in all communities began to find more in common with each other than with modernists in their own traditions. Modernists had a comparable experience. The famous "culture wars" theory both describes and then overstates these trends by ignoring a crucial fact: many of the faithful have not been drawn into these disputes, but remain loyal to the "center" of their historic tradition.

Despite the continued presence of such "centrists," the incipient lines of cleavage within traditions and the budding alliances across old boundaries have had substantial political ramifications. Traditionalists have gravitated toward the GOP, while modernists have joined the Democrats, fracturing—but not destroying—the old ethnoreligious alignments. These trends are most visible among religious and political activists; the real question is how far the partisan polarization will extend to people in the pews. Whatever the answer to that question, this new politics of religious believing and behaving has complicated the old politics of religious belonging.

The new religious order has a third feature: the persistent (and, some would say, growing) detachment of Americans from civic life. Turnout in presidential contests has steadily declined since 1960, with only modest and temporary upturns. Although political factors have played a role in depressing turnout, the deeper cause lies in the decay of the nation's "social capital": the everyday social and organizational connections that nurture citizens' values, define their interests, and connect them to public affairs. As Robert Putnam and his colleagues have amply documented, voluntary activity in organizations has declined significantly since the 1960s, affecting groups from the American Bowling Congress to PTAs to the League of Women Voters. Not even religious life, a most resilient form of social interaction, has been exempt. The atrophy of mainline Protestant churches and dramatic reduction in Catholic mass attendance have been accompanied by the growth of the unaffiliated or secular population. Indeed, most religious institutions have suffered, even the conservative churches that have remained vital by dint of extraordinary effort. Simply put, good "organization citizens" are harder and harder to find. Thus, the complex politics of religious belonging, believing, and behaving occurs in the wider context of social disengagement.

These three changes in religious politics are closely related, but in complex ways. The partisan realignment of evangelicals and black Protestants and the partisan dispersion of white Catholics were strongly encouraged by the culture wars and fostered by an uneven pattern of decay in social capital. And there was a strong link between the culture wars and the decay of social life itself. In many respects, the cultural warriors of right and left have been responding to the decline of social institutions. On one side, traditionalists lamented the erosion of family life, religious institutions, and traditional values caused not only by impersonal social developments but also by the conscious assaults of modernists. For their part, modernists attacked traditional institutions in the hope of building broader and more inclusive communities. Indeed, modernists—and their secular allies—were often as disturbed by decaying civic life as the traditionalists, but preferred to envision new institutions, not resuscitate old ones.

In this sense, the collapse of civic life undermined the special cultural expression of many social groups, threatening to create Richard John Neuhaus' "naked public square." Ironically, this denuded public life gave an opening to the warriors of right and left, each supported by their small, yet cohesive, cultures. Using the leverage of hot-button moral issues, these rivals have been able to shift the dominant partisan allegiances of the major religious traditions. Unfortunately, the culture wars may have accelerated the decline of civic life by damaging institutions and further alienating the disengaged. Indeed, for all the tumult, the generals in the culture wars still lack troops: many Americans refuse to volunteer, some are adamant draft resisters, and many

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have lost their taste for service, even in areas far removed from the front.

To describe the electoral outlines of the new religious order, we use the third quadrennial Survey of Religion and Politics, conducted by the University of Akron for the Ethics and Public Policy Center, and sponsored by the Pew Charitable Trusts. This survey has a larger sample and more religious questions than most polls, allowing us to analyze key elements of the new order in considerable detail. But before we undertake that task, we need to explain our system of religious classification.

Religious traditions represent the "belonging" aspect of religion and are key to understanding its role in politics. These traditions comprise groups of denominations and congregations that share common beliefs, rituals, and historical experiences. Assigning a poll respondent to the correct religious tradition requires in-depth questions, a task that most survey organizations still avoid. The largest religious traditions in the electorate are the evangelical Protestant (26 percent in the Akron survey), mainline Protestant (16 percent), white Roman Catholic (17 percent), and black Protestant (9 percent). Hispanic Christians (both Catholic and Protestant) constitute distinctive ethnic sub-traditions (7 percent). The United States is also home, of course, to many smaller religious traditions, including Judaism, Islam, Latter-day Saints, and others. In addition, a growing number of citizens are essentially "secular" (16 percent), although this group obviously lacks some traits of a tradition properly defined.

Our classification also incorporates the culture wars divisions, based on religious beliefs, behaviors, and ties to religious movements. For purposes of analysis and illustration, we have used this information to divide evangelicals, mainline Protestants, and white Catholics into "traditionalists," "centrists," and "modernists." Although the precise allocation procedure is too complex to present here, we can easily summarize the results. Within each community, "traditionalists" profess orthodox beliefs, exhibit high levels of public and private religious behavior, and identify with "sectarian" movements (e.g., for Protestants, "fundamentalist," "Pentecostal," or "charismatic"). "Modernists" hold more heterodox beliefs, exhibit modest levels of religious practice, and identify with church-like movements (ecumenism, liberalism). Naturally, "centrists" fall between the other two camps on all these measures.

We have not divided smaller religious traditions for two reasons, one practical, and the other theoretical. First, even in a large survey these traditions are too small to subdivide, although evidence indicates such elaboration might sometimes be useful (as in the case of Judaism). Second, most minority traditions are best thought of as persisting examples of the old ethnoreligious politics, in which common theological, racial, or ethnic traits overwhelm any internal theological differences, at least for electoral purposes. Black Protestants, Mormons, and Hispanic Christians fit this older model (as presumably do Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and other minorities not examined here).

The resulting religious classification (listed down the side of the accompanying table) provides us with a snapshot of the new religious order, as manifest in the 2000 election. We have listed religious categories from most Republican to most Democratic, as measured by presidential vote (congressional voting and partisan attachments show much the same pattern). The "Bush" and "Gore" columns report the proportion of the two-party vote received by each from the various religious groups. The final column shows the proportion of a group that did not vote. (The few minor-party voters are omitted.)

Religious Groups and the 2000 Election

	Presidential Vote (in percent)		Nonvoters (in percent)
	Bush	**Gore**	
Latter-day Saints ("Mormons")	88	12	29
White Evangelical Protestants	76	24	51
Traditionalists	86	14	37
Centrists	75	25	58
Modernists	46	54	63
White Mainline Protestants	61	39	47
Traditionalists	75	25	43
Centrists	60	40	50
Modernists	48	52	46
White Roman Catholics	53	47	47
Traditionalists	75	25	41
Centrists	53	47	46
Modernists	30	70	55
Secular	35	65	52
Hispanic Catholics and Protestants	28	72	70
Jews	23	77	18
Black Protestants	4	96	47
Totals	49.8	50.2	50

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A quick glance shows that religious groups made vastly different electoral choices. The Latter-day Saints gave Bush 88 percent of their vote, with Gore receiving only 12 percent. Obviously, there was little real political polarization within this solidly Republican group. All the major traditions, however, reveal at least some culture war divisions. Evangelical Protestants were the most Republican, giving Bush 76 percent of the vote, but evangelical traditionalists gave the GOP candidate 86 percent, while centrists gave him 75 percent, and modernists only 46 percent. Mainline Protestants, the GOP's traditional ethnoreligious bastion, were less Republican (61 percent overall), but exhibited the same internal pattern, with the Bush vote ranging from 75 percent among traditionalists to only 48 percent among modernists.

These results confirm the strong bonds—some ancient, some more recent—of white Protestants to the GOP. One of George Bush's political strengths was that he neatly straddled the evangelical/mainline split, being both "born-again" and a United Methodist. Contrary to some early expectations, he did very well among traditionalists in both groups, perhaps his reward for assiduous cultivation of conservative religious leaders. He attracted many centrists as well, depriving Southern Baptist Al Gore of the more moderate Protestant voters who might well have made him President.

Catholic voters were the object of much political, academic, and journalistic speculation in 2000. In recent years they have become a swing electoral constituency, often closely divided and usually tipping toward the winner. The Bush campaign targeted "church-attending" traditionalist Catholics, an effort hampered initially during the GOP primaries by the flap over his speech at fundamentalist Bob Jones University, an anti-Catholic stronghold. The campaign recovered quickly, however, and maintained the focus on Catholics throughout the fall. And for the first time we see incontrovertible evidence that the culture wars have polarized Catholic laity. Although Bush carried only a narrow majority among white Catholics (53 percent), he defeated Gore by a three-to-one margin among traditionalists, a big improvement over Bob Dole's 53 percent in 1996. Centrists were closely divided, with a slight edge to Bush, but Catholic modernists voted Democratic in overwhelming numbers. These internal divisions among Catholics are the largest ever found by survey research, reaching all the way back to the 1930s.

The rest of the table demonstrates that secular voters and most religious minorities fell squarely in the Democratic camp. Secular voters favored Gore over Bush by an almost two-to-one margin. Hispanics also voted predominantly Democratic, although Protestants were somewhat more supportive of the GOP than were Catholics. Jews also remained in their traditional party location and black Protestants were almost unanimously Democratic. Other minority traditions (Buddhists, Hindus) also favored the Democrats, although some outside evidence suggests that Muslim voters were predominantly for Bush, following his endorsement by leading Islamic organizations.

Clearly, there is a new religious order in American electoral politics, one characterized not only by the distinctive partisanship of religious traditions, but also by theological polarization within the nation's three largest traditions. Perhaps the culture wars will ultimately obliterate these old ethnoreligious attachments, but in 2000 religious traditions still mattered and they will for some time to come. The large centrist group in each tradition epitomizes its central partisan tendency, remaining somewhat deaf to the battle cries of the culture warriors. And ethnoreligious minorities are a vital part of the new religious order, mostly supporting the Democratic Party, the ancient home of cultural minorities of all sorts.

The practical political implications of the new order are more obvious if one considers the composition of each party's vote. In terms of religious tradition, white evangelicals, mainliners, and Catholics provided the great bulk of the Bush vote (40, 21, and 20 percent, respectively), while black Protestants (20 percent), seculars (19 percent), and Jews and other religious minorities (18 percent) provided a solid majority of Gore votes. Looking at the coalitions from a culture wars perspective, evangelical, mainline, and Catholic traditionalists, combined with Latter-day Saints, provided 36 percent of the Bush vote, a figure that rises to 74 percent if centrists from those traditions are included. Even more striking, such traditionalists provided only 8 percent of Gore's total vote, a figure that rises only to 31 percent if centrists are added. The two political parties have very distinctive religious constituencies to appease.

Of course, some observers will deny that religious differences are real, contending that they reflect the disguised operation of social class, gender, marital status, age, or regional cultures. And there is no doubt that such factors are also related to the vote. For example, voters earning less than $25,000 gave Gore 62 percent, but those over $75,000 only 43 percent—a difference comparable to that between evangelicals and Catholics. Voters with a high school diploma or less gave Gore 53 percent, while college graduates gave him 47 percent. (His best educational category was actually postgraduates at 54 percent.) This gap is slightly smaller than that between evangelical traditionalists and centrists. Similar differences appear elsewhere: Bush drew more men than women, more from the young than the elderly, and more married than single people.

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But the modest size of these demographic gaps suggests that personal status factors will not eclipse the influence of religion. And, in fact, when we control for the impact of education, income, age, gender, marital status, and region, the resulting vote distribution looks very much like that in the table. Indeed, education and income—prime indicators of social class—virtually drop out of a multivariate analysis when these religious measures are included. All this goes to confirm that, to borrow a title from an earlier First Things article, "It's the Culture, Stupid" (April 1994).

What accounts for these configurations? A simple question, but the answer is complex, and we can suggest only the beginning of one. Certainly these patterns express the distinctive party attachments of religious groups (what political scientists call "party identification") and, for that matter, their evaluations of the candidates. Evangelical traditionalists are heavily Republican, and liked Bush; Catholic modernists are largely Democratic, and preferred Gore. But these factors are to some degree the product of the groups' characteristic political attitudes, not only on the great cultural conflicts of the past three decades, but also—to a lesser extent—on economic and "scope of government" issues dating all the way back to the New Deal. The religious constituencies at the heart of the Republican and Democratic coalitions are distinctive on both sets of core issues.

To assess the role of moral issues, we used voters' opinions on abortion, women's rights, gay rights, and government-sponsored lotteries. Similarly, to measure New Deal issues and their progeny, we looked at questions on increasing government services, enacting a national health care program, government spending on hunger, aiding minorities, and protecting the environment. For each policy dimension we calculated an overall conservatism/liberalism score. If the new religious order is produced by the political values distinguishing religious groups, we should find the same basic pattern on these two issue complexes that we find in the vote. And we do.

Sharp cultural issue divisions certainly underlie the voting patterns. Not surprisingly, Latter-day Saints hold the most conservative moral values, but evangelical traditionalists finish a close second, followed at some distance by Catholic, and then mainline, traditionalists. In each major tradition, centrists hug the national averages, while modernists fall on the liberal (and Democratic) side, by only a small margin among evangelicals, but more decisively among Catholics and, especially, mainline Protestants. Indeed, modernist mainliners' strong moral liberalism matches that of secular voters, and is exceeded only by Jewish voters. Black Protestants, Hispanic Christians, and non-Christian religious minorities fall solidly on the liberal side, close to Catholic modernists, but falling well short of mainline modernists. On the whole, though, the position of religious groups on moral and cultural issues closely mimics their voting pattern.

Although religious groups have distinctive views on social welfare issues as well, the pattern is a little different from that on moral questions. Once again, Latter-day Saints are most conservative, followed closely by evangelical traditionalists, and more distantly by mainline traditionalists. But at this point the story gets more complicated. First, both centrist and modernist evangelicals tilt to the conservative side, as do mainline centrists, perhaps reflecting classic Protestant economic individualism. Second, there is little difference among the three Catholic subgroups, as both traditionalists and modernists fall barely on the conservative side, while centrists sit right on top of the national mean. We can only speculate whether Catholic traditionalists' relative liberalism (compared to their Protestant counterparts) reflects loyalty to the Church's historic social teachings or simply a collective memory of the day when Catholics benefited from the New Deal's social welfare policies. Finally, the liberal side on social welfare issues consists, in order of increasing liberalism, of secular voters, mainline modernists, Hispanic Christians, black Protestants, and Jews.

Thus, the new religious order clearly embodies the distinctive policy values of religious groups. And although the rank of most religious groups differs slightly from one dimension to the other, there is a fairly strong correlation between the dimensions, producing similar group patterns. If one looks for those defining the religious ends of the partisan continuum, one finds Mormons and evangelical traditionalists on the one side, and Jewish voters on the other, anchoring the conservative and liberal ends of both policy dimensions. We might also note that the distance between Republican and Democratic voters on both issue dimensions has become wider since 1992, paralleling the growing differences between (and within) religious traditions.

The distinctive political values of each religious group are also inculcated, reinforced, and activated by mobilizing forces. And, as we might expect, most groups are subject to at least some blandishments from both party and interest organizations. In the Akron survey we asked citizens whether they had been contacted by a number of religious and secular sources. In the electorate as a whole, we found secular mobilization efforts only slightly more frequent than those deriving from religious sources, a powerful indicator of the extent of religious mobilization. We also found a complex, but intuitively plausible, pattern reflecting the dynamics of the new religious order. In the three largest

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religious traditions, traditionalists usually reported more religious contacts than secular ones, while modernists reported a surplus of secular contacts over religious. Interestingly, in each religious group Bush voters were more often the targets of religious contacts than Gore voters, whatever the overall balance of religious and secular contacts. The total number of such contacts is still modest, however, suggesting that parties and candidates could significantly improve their vote totals with more intense and more targeted mobilization efforts.

If electoral choices strongly reflect the new religious order, it is still important to consider those not incorporated in that order. Indeed, nonvoters constituted almost half the potential electorate. The final column in the table reports the percentage of each group that did not vote in 2000, a crude but effective measure of disengagement. The results are intriguing. Among the "Republican-leaning" constituencies, traditionalists would seem to be most firmly attached to the new religious order, with smaller proportions not participating: Latter-day Saints (29 percent), traditionalist evangelicals (37 percent), traditionalist Catholics (41 percent), and traditionalist mainliners (43 percent). On the Democratic side, Jews are not only firmly partisan but also fully engaged, with only 18 percent not voting. Mainline Protestant modernists almost match their traditionalist brothers and sisters at 46 percent, but evangelical and Catholic modernists abstain more often (63 and 55 percent, respectively), and secular citizens show a fairly high rate of nonvoting (52 percent). Black Protestant turnout increased in 2000, certainly bolstering the virtually unanimous choice for the Democrats in that group. Only Hispanic Christians have little attachment to the new religious order, with 70 percent not voting.

What explains a citizen's decision to stay home on election day? Political scientists have traditionally attributed nonvoting to a lack of political interest and knowledge, educational and income disadvantages, absence of organizational ties, and the failure of parties, candidates, and interest groups to reach citizens. And the Akron survey reveals that all were important factors in 2000. Clearly, psychological engagement was the best predictor of voting: those who knew most and cared most about politics voted at the highest rate. In a closely related vein, those who perceived major differences between Bush and Gore were also more likely to participate, while those who saw modest differences (perhaps because they knew little about either) were least likely to go to the polls. Educational attainment certainly influenced knowledge about and interest in politics, but encouraged turnout in other ways as well. Income by itself, on the other hand, was a much less important stimulus to voting.

These results are hardly unexpected, fitting well the models developed by academics for explaining turnout. More interesting is the way that social networks, organizational involvement, and group mobilization affected voting. Our findings confirm Putnam's insight: Americans who live rich organizational lives, both religious and secular, were more likely to vote (and much more likely to participate beyond voting). And because of these connections, they were also more likely to find themselves in religious and secular communication networks that further encouraged participation.

Why, then, do some religious groups participate at a high rate, while others do not? Although our analysis is preliminary, we have already discovered that the impact of the factors discussed above varied substantially among religious traditions. Psychological engagement was important everywhere, especially for Catholic and secular voters, but much less so for evangelicals and black Protestants. Education was also an important predictor of turnout in all traditions, especially among Jews, while income is a significant but minor predictor across all religious groups. For evangelicals and Catholics, the married were more likely to vote than single people when everything else is taken into account, but this was not true for other religious groups. Among black Protestants and secular voters, women were slightly more likely to vote than men.

The more significant findings concern the impact of social capital, both religious and secular. Scholars have long observed that church attendance is consistently associated with higher turnout, but they have not been sure why. Do the faithful vote more frequently because they are reminded of elections at church? Or because the clergy provide political direction? Or because information is available in voter guides and other material? We asked many questions about politics in the congregation and discovered that church attendance is often a proxy for several different kinds of activation.

For evangelical and mainline Protestants, church attendance encouraged voting primarily by providing an opportunity for friends to exchange talk about the election. Such activity partially accounts for the strikingly high turnout among evangelical traditionalists, who still have some educational and other political disadvantages that might normally limit their electoral participation. These people were not only in church more often than most other religious people, but they were also especially likely to engage in political discussions there. For Catholics, political talk among friends in church was much less frequent; rather it was strong parish connections that appeared to stimulate political activities. Even among Jews, with their exceptionally high turnout, attending religious services stimulated

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voting. Among black Protestants church-based mobilization of voters achieved the status of an art form, confirming the legendary political prowess of the African-American church. Pastoral discussion of politics, conversations with friends, presence of voting material, and holding church office all added to the likelihood of voting.

Although religious institutions are one of the most significant sites of voluntary association activity, other kinds of social capital also affected voting. At first glance, that impact might appear limited. In our initial analysis, we found that voluntary activities outside the church were direct predictors of turnout only for mainline Protestants—the quintessential organizational generalists. As it turns out, though, these associations were equally vital for evangelicals, Catholics, black Protestants, and secular voters, but in an indirect way. For members of these groups, social and organizational involvement produced greater psychological engagement in politics, which in turn encouraged voting. Indeed, for secular citizens, largely detached from religious institutions, such social engagement was especially potent in connecting the citizen to politics. Similarly, direct contacts from political organizations—candidates, party organizations, interest groups—were also vital in encouraging turnout among secular voters, and to a lesser extent for mainline Protestants, Catholics, and even evangelicals.

How would greater turnout have affected the election results in 2000? The conventional wisdom is that greater turnout helps Democratic candidates, but this chestnut is not necessarily true. Although nonvoters tend to be centrist on issues, perceive fewer differences between the candidates, and care less about the outcome than voters do, these generalizations apply within the context of particular religious groups. For example, evangelical nonvoters fall between their brethren who voted for Bush or Gore on such measures, but they were closer to Bush on moral issues, and closer to Gore on social welfare questions. Thus, the impact of additional turnout is often unclear, in this or other religious traditions. Whether increased voting would benefit the GOP or the Democrats might well depend on which issues were salient and which groups increased their turnout. With such large contingents of nonparticipants in almost every religious tradition, mobilization differentials are politically crucial in the closely divided new religious order.

The election of 2000 left half the electorate pleased, and the other half dissatisfied. The former welcomed a Republican President who would restore integrity to the White House, advance conservative moral causes, and resist growth of the federal government. The latter wanted a Democrat who would support abortion rights, protect the environment and gay rights, and use the federal government's power to promote national health care and education. Beyond the ranks of voters, half the population failed to participate, completing the "50 percent solution."

Religion played a key role in determining both the partisan polarization and the disengagement that characterized the public in 2000. Proponents of the culture wars argument can certainly find some confirmation in the results. Religious traditionalists, including their Latter-day Saint allies, provided the core constituency for George Bush, while Al Gore depended heavily on religious modernists and secular voters. Religious traditions still matter, however, as Bush drew upon evangelical and mainline Protestants of all stripes and Gore gathered strength from black Protestants, Jews, and other religious minorities. But even in the religious groups most torn by the culture wars and in every religious tradition, many citizens were still disengaged, especially those outside the web of institutional ties.

As political scientist Walter Dean Burnham has suggested, such complex party coalitions are best described by geological metaphors. Today the ancient ethnoreligious bedrock of vote choice has been eroded by rising tides of disengagement, while simultaneously being fractured by the upheavals of cultural politics. Indeed, the religious formations we saw in 2000 have been developing for some time and have now solidified. This fact has vital ramifications for governance. In the future Republicans will remain solicitous of traditionalists, and evangelical traditionalists in particular, while Democrats will privilege the concerns of religious minorities, secularists, and modernists. Regardless of well-meaning admonitions to both parties to "move to the center," ignoring such large core constituencies would be political suicide.

Of course, a recurring "50 percent solution" satisfies no one. Both parties will seek electoral dominance by mobilizing the disengaged in their core constituencies, by attracting more swing voters, or by making inroads into previously hostile groups. Republicans will find that bolstering their core vote will be easiest among evangelical traditionalists and centrists because they constitute the bulk of the large evangelical population, are quite pro-life, and are accessible through church-based organizing techniques. Reaching more mainline and Catholic traditionalists is not as easy, given their dispersion in politically pluralistic religious institutions, but it is equally necessary. In the same way, Democrats face not only the relatively simple organizational task of mobilizing black Protestants, but also the more difficult one of reaching other religious minorities. Activating the growing coterie of secular voters is even more problematic, as many are cut off not only from religious institutions, but from other organizations as well.

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Building winning coalitions requires not only the care and activation of core constituencies, but also the cultivation of new supporters. Both parties have some clear options here. Republicans must try to expand their coalition among those on the conservative side of the center, especially Catholics, but the more promising route is to cut into the Democratic stranglehold among religious minorities. The centrality of the church, the conservative theologies, and the traditionalist moral leanings of many black and Hispanic religious communities provide a place to start. If the GOP can produce policies that address the daily concerns of minorities, economic as well as cultural, and find a role for community religious institutions to play in implementation, the party's new religious tone might be an attraction, rather than a liability, to religious voters in other traditions. For the Republicans, the question is, can "compassionate conservatism" go beyond pious rhetoric to become a governing principle?

For Democrats, the best route is to expand their beachhead among modernist evangelicals and centrist mainline Protestants, and to retake the Catholic center. They can make such inroads by emphasizing moderation, rather than all-out liberalism, on moral issues, and by defending a vital, but restrained, role for the federal government in education, health care, and the environment. For the Democrats, the question is, can Bill Clinton's "New Covenant" be reintroduced and transformed from a campaign slogan into a vision for moral governance?

The success of either party in transforming its characteristic "religious" appeal into a public theology may depend upon effective exploitation of social capital. Throughout this essay we have discussed the role that social capital plays—or no longer plays—in bringing Americans into the public square. We have found that those religious groups that maintain a strong institutional life, inside or outside the church, have become dominant actors in their respective parties. And yet there is another facet of this issue. Many types of organizational connection may enhance political mobilization: the tight religious cohesion of evangelical traditionalists or black Protestants serves just as well as the institutional activism of some secular liberals. But both these forms of involvement represent Putnam's "bonding" social capital, in which social involvement takes place primarily within the group and does not extend to the larger community. Such social capital may provide electoral advantages, but it does not provide sturdy religious underpinnings for either "compassionate conservatism" or a "new covenant."

What is needed is "bridging" social capital: activity that reaches beyond the religious group itself to work with others on causes that involve "loving thy neighbor," but are not purely sectarian in nature. Traditionalist Protestants and Roman Catholics are remarkably generous in donating their time and energy to worthy causes: we find (as Putnam did) that they are much more engaged on the whole than religious liberals or secular people. But they are also more likely to volunteer in ways that bond them with one another, serving the needs of people within the community of faith, rather than connect to the needs of others beyond the fold. In this respect, the declining number of mainline Protestants is particularly disturbing, for this group has led the way historically in both "inside" and "outside" volunteering, as well as other efforts at civic revitalization. We do not mean to deprecate the value of "brightening the corner where you are," but people of faith need to extend their light outside the perimeter of their own communities. Only then can citizens truly express compassionate conservatism or join in a new covenant, reinvigorating America's civic culture. Such renewal, if it is to occur, must take place within the new religious order, for these matters are fundamental to our political soul. FT

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Good Wars

Darrell Cole

Fighting, killing, making war. Human beings have been doing it almost from the very beginning and show no signs of an inclination to cease and desist. Many claim that the Christian tradition is ambivalent when it comes to prosecuting wars, even in a just cause—and this, so it is alleged, because the founder of Christianity rejected all use of force. Jesus of course did acknowledge that the authority to use force came from his Father (John 19:11), but it must be admitted that, unlike the founder of Islam, the founder of Christianity did not use a sword.

For a variety of reasons (mainly focusing on the idea that Jesus' rejection of force was meant to be unique to him rather than emulated by his followers), Jesus' refusal of the sword did not keep Christians from employing it in increasing numbers, beginning sometime around the end of the second century. Nor did Jesus' refusal prevent some early Church Fathers from defending the use of force. Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, Ambrose, and Augustine, to name just four, defended the just use of force unequivocally. Their various "defenses"—especially Augustine's—were the genesis of the Christian Just War doctrine, a doctrine which insists that war can be the sort of thing Christians ought to support. None of these early Christian approaches to war treated it as a necessary evil. Each held that the person who used just force was acting in a way consonant with God's wishes and was, though in a way less praiseworthy than bishops and clerics, following Christ. The just soldier's acts in war were thus thought to be positively good acts—acts that would shape him into the kind of person fit for beatitude with God. But this moral approach to war is not much favored today. Few of our contemporaries wish to claim that God elevates soldiers through their virtuous acts on the battlefield. The idea strikes many of us as morally grotesque.

There are two main reasons why many Christians today wish to disown the tradition's acceptance of warfare as a potential good. They derive from strains of thought that have seeped into the Christian conscience and inform many modern Christian attitudes toward war. First, there is the influence of Christian pacifism. The complaint from this quarter is that one cannot follow Jesus—and thus cannot be a Christian in the fullest sense (if in any sense at all)—unless one rejects all recourse to the use of force. Christians on this view should follow the lead of the early Church, which, we are told, rejected the use of force, at least until the "Constantinian Fall" that supposedly ushered in the age of Christian imperialism. The second reason many contemporary Christians have rejected recourse to violence is that liberal-humanist ideas have convinced them that war is something inhuman, unreasoned, and unpurposeful. It is thus also something inherently ignoble, unworthy of human nature, and out of step with contemporary mores and the direction of history.

This new view of war is all around us. The recent controversy over Senator Bob Kerrey's activities in Vietnam is a good example. Senator Kerrey received the Bronze Star for actions that have come under scrutiny of late. Apparently Senator Kerrey, while on active service in Vietnam, led a raid in which many civilians were killed. Kerrey insists that the attack on civilians was unintentional and I have no reason to dispute him. In any event, Kerrey received a medal for his work. He also received the Medal of Honor for a different action. Kerrey has stated that he deserves neither. Perhaps he is right, but he does not stop at that. He maintains that medals are given out in war in order to "clean the war

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up"—to make us feel good about something we should never feel good about. Kerrey's comments are typical of the modern ethos of war: war may be necessary, but it is inherently base and vile, and it taints everything it touches. The medals, Kerrey suggests, are one way we hide this unpleasant reality from ourselves.

The modern ethos of war was first articulated by Erasmus, who argued at length that war was unnatural and unfitting for human beings, and that even just wars are morally unacceptable. But this ethos really began to gain ground during the Enlightenment, when philosophers began to argue in earnest that warfare was unworthy of civilization and even antithetical to good government. Add to these arguments the impersonal nature of mechanized warfare, the terrible, brutal nature of World War I trench warfare, the use of saturation bombing during World War II, and the debacle of the Vietnam conflict, and the result is a virtual consensus that war cannot possibly be a noble activity, much less an activity in conformity with following Christ. Indeed, the inglorious nature of modern combat led Protestant theologian Karl Barth to comment with approval that warfare had finally been "stripped of the veneer" of glory and nobility in which it had been cloaked in premodern times.

In his great *Church Dogmatics,* Barth treated war as an *ultima ratio*—something, therefore, that is barely human and surely not anything that could be called noble or virtuous. Nor is this sort of thinking confined to Protestants. Catholic moral theologian Charles Curran, for example, once worried in a debate with Paul Ramsey—a noted champion of the Christian Just War doctrine—that Ramsey did not take seriously enough the fact that war must be an *ultima ratio.* Curran feared that Ramsey thought war a reasonable form of human activity (which he did). The worry for Curran—as it is for many like-minded thinkers—is that we might be more likely to fight a war if we believe war can be reasonable. Curran also worried that Ramsey did not understand the realities of war because he did not spend a lot of time discussing the "horrors of war." "One can read all his [Ramsey's] writings on war," Curran wrote, "without having any impression of the horrors involved in modern warfare." Curran finds the horrors of war to be the most important thing, ethically speaking, about them.

On one level, Curran is, of course, on the right track. War is not to be entered into lightly—especially modern war with its propensity for disproportionate measures in combat. Nor is it a bad thing to want nations to refrain from going to war with little provocation, as, for instance, certain Italian city-states were wont to do in the sixteenth century. On another level, however, Curran is misguided. There is no reason to assume, for example, that simply because we believe that war can be a purposeful and reasoned activity that we will be inclined to engage in it too easily. In fact, defenders of Christian Just War doctrine typically argue that we ought to be reluctant to fight wars that lack sufficient moral and rational justification. Defenders of the Just War tradition regret that they live in a world where they have to kill human beings in order to restrain evil; that is to say, they regret the Fall. But they find it to be even more regretful for Christians to stand idly by while people are being abused and killed unjustly.

Despite the dominant view of war as something inherently ignoble and incompatible with Christian living, most Christians still approve of wars from time to time, deeming them "necessary evils." This is not necessarily a contradiction, though it is a paradox. Popular opinion on the matter tells us that resorting to force in certain situations is "necessary" to save the lives of victims of injustice (including ourselves). Yet such actions are also held to be "evil" because warlike acts are "inhuman" and do not follow the model of Christian living found in the life of Jesus.

One way of describing this kind of moral thinking is to call it "dirty hands" morality. The thought here is that we cannot both follow Jesus in living nonviolently *and* be "responsible" citizens at the same time, so we go ahead and behave "responsibly" (i.e., we use force), but we admit that in doing so we get our hands dirty, which calls for repentance. There is no such thing, in this view, as a warlike act that does not demand repentance. So, we commit sinful acts when we use force, even when it is employed for the sake of just ends. Thus warfare is viewed not as a possible positive good but as a necessary evil that taints all who touch it.

There is an additional reason why the bulk of the Christian laity accepts the modern ethos of war: their leaders have bought into it. We see evidence of both pacifism and liberal humanism influencing official Church documents on war in the twentieth century, both Protestant and Catholic. A typical example is the World Council of Churches' 1958 document "Christians and the Prevention of War in the Atomic Age." The WCC rejects war as a potential good and renounces all war as incompatible with Christianity. Nevertheless, a particular war may be a "necessary evil"—necessary either to protect some good or, best of all, to banish war altogether. But such a "necessary" war will not be a "just" war. When we say that we will allow an evil deed (such as fighting a war) in order to end a greater evil (such as the murderous policies of a tyrannical government), the former is not transformed into an act of justice. It is certainly a permissible act, but it is not a just one. On this view, then, there can be no "just" wars.

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More recent examples of this thinking can be found in the pastoral letters on war offered by U.S. bishops, both Catholic and Methodist (*The Challenge of Peace* [1983] and *In Defense of Creation* [1986], respectively). In both pastorals, the bishops assume that just war theory and pacifism share equal status in the tradition and that pacifism ought to inform just war thinking. Indeed, the bishops would agree with Christian pacifist Stanley Hauerwas, who has written that "Christians created just war reflection because of their nonviolent convictions" (a cursory glance at the Church Fathers mentioned above belies this claim). The trouble is that the bishops, like Hauerwas, cannot figure out a way to make the military profession compatible with the life of Christ. Is it any wonder, then, that the laity have so much trouble trying to follow the teaching of the bishops? This has not always been the case. The tradition, both Catholic and Protestant, possesses figures who have taught a very different approach to the morality of warfare.

When Thomas Aquinas discusses just war in the *Summa Theologiae* (II-II.40), he does not do so in the section on justice, but rather in the section on charity—specifically, the love of God. He makes it clear that war is not a vice that is opposed to the love of God. On the contrary, war-making, when just, can be a form of love. Of course, war is always contrary to peace, but this is sometimes desirable, since peace is not always a just order that deserves to be preserved. Nazi Germany, for example, provided peace and order for most of those in conquered countries who were willing to accept Nazi rule. But no one wishes to argue that the peace provided by Nazis is the sort of peace we ought to preserve. War, for Aquinas, can be a means to a just peace as well as a means to destroy an unjust peace (such as one established by Nazis). We keep a just peace and fight just wars because these are acts of charity. Just soldiering, in other words, is something Christians ought to do out of love for God and neighbor, and thus it is the most "human" thing we can do in certain circumstances.

But if Aquinas believes that fighting a just war justly is a meritorious act, he also diverges from the modern presumption against the use of force that can be found in many recent moral approaches to war. Stanley Hauerwas, for example, has argued that Christian just war advocates and pacifists share a presumption against acts of force and that this presumption actually generates the just war criteria (the aforementioned bishops seem to be in full accord with him on this). Such a presumption cannot be found in Aquinas, nor can it be found in Calvin (nor, we might add, in Ambrose, Augustine, or Luther). A few quotations will suffice to prove the point. When Aquinas discusses the New Law and its relationship to the Old Law, he says "the intention of the [Old] Law was that retaliation should be sought out of the love of justice . . . and this remains still in the New Law." Moreover, in his discussion of Paul's advice to the Romans concerning the governing authorities (Romans 13:1-7), Aquinas insists that it is not merely allowable but positively "meritorious for princes to exercise vindication of justice with zeal against evil people." We also find Aquinas arguing that it is both "praiseworthy and advantageous" for someone in proper authority to kill a person dangerous to the community. When we look at these claims, surely we must say that the presumption is not against force but against injustice. More importantly, on this view, charity does not merely allow for violent action, but even demands it in certain circumstances.

Calvin, too, looks at the soldier as an agent of God's love. As he argues: "Paul meant to refer the precept of respecting power of magistrates to the law of love." The soldier is thus as much an agent of God's love as he is of God's wrath, for the two characteristics are harmonious in God. Calvin argues in this way because he holds that to soldier justly—to restrain evil out of love for neighbor—is a God-like act. It is God-like because God restrains evil out of love for His creatures. None of this is to say that we fully imitate God or Christ when we use force justly, for the just soldier's acts can never be redemptive acts—acts that have a saving quality for those who are targets of the acts of force (except, of course, in the sense that the just soldier "saves" the unjust neighbor from more unjust acts). Yet the just soldier who cultivates the military virtues in such a way as to harness and direct them toward his final end—beatitude with God—may nevertheless be said to be one who, as the Reformers liked to say, follows Christ at a distance.

The military virtues looked upon so fondly by Aquinas and Calvin are greatly frowned upon today. Few think of soldiering as an honorable and noble occupation—not even the U.S. Army, or so it seems. Indeed, one would never guess from today's recruiting commercials that the whole point of being in the military is to use—or believably be prepared to use—lethal force as effectively as possible. Catchy slogans ("Be All You Can Be" and "An Army of One") promise the development of abilities that become useful only *after* a person's time in the military is over. The prospective soldier's opportunity to serve his country is downplayed, presumably because the military does not want to remind people that military service can involve fighting, dying, and killing for one's country. It is as if the Armed Forces are ashamed to admit that they are in the business of using—or threatening to use—lethal force. Senator Kerrey surely captured this aspect of military service when he remarked that he was sent to Vietnam "not to hand out leaflets" but "to kill people."

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How can we follow Christ—even at a distance—while fighting and killing? Calvin gives us an indication by pointing out that Christ's pacific nature (his willingness to suffer violence at the hands of Jewish and Roman authorities) is grounded in the priestly office of reconciliation and intercession that is reserved for him alone. Christ's pacific nature is thus inextricably tied to his role as redeemer and cannot be intended as a model for Christian behavior. No Christian can or should try to act as a redeemer, but all can and should follow Christ in obeying the commands of the Father. And the Father commands the just use of force.

Calvin is not alone in this way of thinking. Aquinas, for example, distinguished between those who follow the "counsels of perfection"—bishops and clerics—and those who do not. According to Aquinas, bishops and clerics cannot be soldiers because these occupations cannot "be fittingly exercised at the same time." Aquinas offers two reasons why. First, warlike pursuits keep clergy from their proper duties. In other words, their participation is unlawful, not because war is evil, but because warlike pursuits prevent them from doing their jobs. Second, it is "unbecoming" for those who give the Eucharist to shed blood, even if they do so without sin (i.e., in a just war). Unlike Calvin, then, Aquinas finds the duties of clergy to be more meritorious than the duties of soldiers. However, this does not mean that, in Aquinas' view, the soldier's duties have no merit. Rather, he employs an analogy to make quite the opposite point: it is meritorious to marry but better still to remain a virgin and thus dedicate yourself wholly to spiritual concerns. Likewise, it is meritorious to fight just wars and restrain evil as a soldier, but more meritorious still to serve as a bishop who provides the Eucharist to the faithful.

Clergy nevertheless ought to offer spiritual help to the military. Aquinas insists that "among the faithful carnal wars should be considered as having for their end the divine spiritual good to which clerics are deputed. Wherefore it is the duty of clerics to dispose and counsel other men to engage in just wars." Aquinas also approves of prayers that ask God to inflict temporal ills on enemies and insists that it is the duty of clerics to urge and counsel others to engage in just wars. He even argues that it would be acceptable to found a religious order for the purpose of soldiering. Such an order could not be established for any worldly purpose, but would instead have to fight for the defense of divine worship, as well as to ensure public safety and protect the poor and oppressed. Aquinas clearly does not seek to keep those who follow the "counsels of perfection" from involvement in military matters, but rather makes it a duty for them to participate in just war-making.

As noted above, many of our contemporaries worry that viewing warfare as a positive good will incline us to fight wars. But this is simply not the case. The tradition has always demanded that the criteria known as the *jus ad bellum* be met before Christians can give consent to a proposed war. Aquinas writes of three such requirements: right authority, just cause, and right intention. A lawful sovereign fits the bill for the first. As for the second and third, he quotes lists from Augustine on sufficient provocations for waging a just war: avenging wrongs, punishing a nation, and restoring what has been unjustly seized are included as just causes, while securing peace, punishing evildoers, and uplifting the good are said to be signs of right intention. These sensible criteria regarding when to fight remain useful for Christians in any era.

The issue of *how* we fight is another matter. Aquinas himself offers little guidance regarding the proper rules for fighting (called *jus in bello*). Nevertheless, we can extrapolate a handful of guidelines from his writings. For one thing, we can presume that we should fight with the right intention, that is, we must intend to punish not just anyone, but only evildoers. Likewise, we should do our best to see that our use of force does not detract from our duty to uphold the good. Of course, the ability to target only those who deserve to be punished, no less than the capacity to formulate plans of action that will issue in more good than evil, must be cultivated. Thus, for Aquinas, right conduct in war is dependent upon the virtues of soldiers and the commanders who lead them.

Unlike Aquinas, Calvin has little to say about the requirements for a just war, but he does insist that the lawful sovereign has a duty to take up arms to defend the commonwealth against those who attack it (*Institutes* IV.20). Calvin also insists that wars should not be waged in anger, nor in order to vent passions on others. It is a sign that we have fallen short of beatitude when our passions lead us to use force unjustly. This is why Calvin argues that princes should go to war only when driven to it by necessity and out of concern for the public good. Lastly, because soldiering is conceived as an office of love, Calvin rejects outright mercenary soldiering (a popular profession among the Swiss of Calvin's time), since it encourages soldiers to fight merely out of love of money and not out of love for their neighbors. For Calvin, soldiering loses its Christian function and legitimacy when it becomes a commodity.

The moral approach to war in Aquinas and Calvin is refreshing for those familiar with modern Christian approaches to warfare—approaches which, more often than not, do little to help Christians understand why they should be prepared to participate in or support war of any kind. Aquinas and Calvin, in con-

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trast, teach Christian soldiers why they need to participate in and support just wars. From the divine point of view, God desires to restrain evil among His creatures. And in using human beings to do so, God actually elevates the restrainers (if they are just soldiers who fight for love of God and neighbor) to a closer relationship with Him through their acts of force. In other words, just soldiers fight on the path of sanctification in preparation for beatitude with God. From the human point of view, the virtue of charity (the love of God) drives just soldiers to do all they can to restrain evil—to see that justice is done—and this sometimes means using force.

This strikes a discordant note among many. How, we are asked, can an act of force be loving? The short answer is that force becomes an act of love when it seeks to resemble God's use of force. In practice this means, among other things, that acts of force must never involve intrinsic evil (such as intentionally killing innocent people, for instance).

The most noteworthy aspect of the moral approach to warfare in Aquinas and Calvin is that it teaches—contrary to today's prevailing views—that a failure to engage in a just war is a failure of virtue, a failure to act well. An odd corollary of this conclusion is that it is a greater evil for Christians to fail to wage a just war than it is for unbelievers. When an unbeliever fails to go to war, the cause may be a lack of courage, prudence, or justice. He may be a coward or simply indifferent to evil. These are failures of natural moral virtue. When Christians (at least in the tradition of Aquinas and Calvin) fail to engage in just war, it may involve all of these natural failures as well, but it will also, and more significantly, involve a failure of charity. The Christian who fails to use force to aid his neighbor when prudence dictates that force is the best way to render that aid is an uncharitable Christian. Hence, Christians who willingly and knowingly refuse to engage in a just war do a vicious thing: they fail to show love toward their neighbor as well as toward God. FT

The Dying Man's Will

Trim my nails before I die.
My Maker would approve
of crossing t's and dotting i's.
The details much I love.

My bank account make ready,
each decimal in its place.
I want my money exactly recorded
before I meet Him face to face.

My garden—especially the dill and cumin—
ensure it's green and tall.
I want to point to my little Eden
when asked about the Fall.

Provide the priest with written sermon
detailing all the works I've done.
I want my memory etched in memory
when all my praise is sung.

Bruce W. Speck

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Drawing Pro-Life Lines

Nathan Schlueter

In last fall's presidential election pro-life voters were faced with a difficult moral choice emblematic of the politics of abortion in general: Does moral principle demand a vote for a marginally pro-life candidate with a chance of winning, or does it demand a vote for a completely pro-life candidate who has little to no chance of winning? Judie Brown of the American Life League, among others, took pro-lifers to task for choosing the former principle rather than the latter in their support of George W. Bush. (For purposes of this discussion, I will accept the claim that Bush is "marginally" pro-life, although the accuracy of the term is debatable.) Pointing out that Bush supports exceptions for rape, incest, and life of the mother, she reminded voters that "every abortion is a direct attack on God, as Pope John Paul II pointed out in *Evangelium Vitae*, and therefore a politician who favors this violence, even if only in limited circumstances, is not pro-life. He or she is at odds with God's commandment: 'Thou shalt not kill.' I cannot in good conscience cast my vote for someone who favors the total destruction of even one baby, even when I am challenged with the argument that the 'other guy' is even worse. . . . It is not . . . our job to get 'the lesser of two evils' elected."

The election, of course, is now long over, but so long as America remains a democratic republic the dilemma will continue in various forms. What, then, is the responsibility of the pro-life voter? Judie Brown's implication that it is morally illicit to vote for a candidate who supports abortion, even in limited cases, while immensely attractive for those who feel deeply the horror of abortion (as I do), is based on a principle that is deeply flawed and therefore politically dangerous. In the seductive guise of moral purity, it represents a failure to distinguish between degrees of cooperation in moral choice and collapses an ethic of political choice into an individual ethic. In so doing, it virtually removes pro-lifers from effective engagement with politics, and surrenders "the world" to moral evil.

In saying all of this, I should make it clear that my argument is *not* that all pro-lifers have a responsibility to temporize with evil. People can legitimately disagree over the best course of action in the circumstances, and there are sufficient grounds to make it at least plausible that cooperation with the establishment (the "marginally pro-life") will not serve the ultimate purpose of ending abortion in America. But this is a calculation of prudence, and differs greatly from the argument that it is *morally illicit* to support a "marginally" pro-life candidate. It is this last argument that merits careful examination and strong refutation.

What are the principles at stake? First, it is never morally licit to choose an intrinsic evil, such as abortion. The classic case is "Sophie's choice," where the mother is asked to choose which child she will spare from death, or both will be killed. The correct choice (though some ethicists disagree on this point) is to refuse to choose even if both children will be killed, and even if one could be saved, for if she chooses, she is cooperating in the evil.

"Sophie's choice" should be differentiated from "the case of the runaway train." Here, you are driving a runaway train (that is, with no brakes) which reaches a split in the tracks. On the one side is one person; on the other side are two people. In this case, your responsibility is to choose the "lesser evil," which is the track with only one person. This case differs from the first in that it does not involve cooperation with moral evil (you are

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not willing or causing the driving force of the train), and that necessity therefore demands a choice.

Both of the these types of cases, in turn, should be distinguished from "the principle of double effect" in which, under certain circumstances, one must choose a good even with the knowledge that an evil will result. The conditions are: 1) the moral object must not be evil; 2) the evil result is tolerated, not intended; 3) the good effect doesn't result directly from the evil effect; and 4) there must be a proportionate reason for doing the act. The classic case here is ectopic pregnancy, in which the fallopian tube must be removed, even when the result will be the death of the child. Here the moral object is to save the life of the mother, and the action to achieve that object is removal of the fallopian tube, not the direct killing of the unborn child. The death of the child (a great material evil) is *tolerated* (not directly intended or caused) because the moral object (the life of the mother) is sufficiently proportionate to it.

Before we can ask into which of these categories a vote for a marginally pro-life candidate should be placed, we must distinguish multiple levels of cooperation with evil. In every abortion, for example, there are multiple persons involved to various degrees. There is the mother, the father (perhaps), the abortionist, the assistants at the clinic, the receptionist, etc. But there is also the manufacturer of the medical instruments that make abortion possible, the owner of the building in which the abortion takes place, the citizens who know abortion is transpiring and yet refuse to help the baby, the judges who gave the woman the "right" to have the abortion, the executive who enforces the "right," the grocery store that sells the abortionist food and consequently takes "blood money," and so on, ad infinitum.

Is each of these individuals equally culpable for the murder? Are there some on this list who are not culpable, although they may indirectly have assisted in the murder? We can treat this problem by distinguishing between formal and informal, mediate and immediate types of cooperation. Formal cooperation means that the person *intends* the same end as the person with whom he or she is cooperating. An example would be the cooperation between the mother seeking the abortion and the abortionist. Both are culpable for the evil in which they cooperate. Informal cooperation refers to a circumstance in which a person does not intend the evil end of the person with whom he or she is cooperating; the extent of moral culpability depends upon the immediacy of the help offered to the person committing the immoral act. Immediate informal cooperation is thus illicit even though the evil is not intended. For example, when the abortion nurse hands the doctor the suction curettage device while telling herself "what this doctor is doing is evil," she is still culpable. At some point, however, immediate informal cooperation becomes mediate and lessens significantly in culpability. That is, there is some point at which your cooperation with evil intentions is so attenuated that you are no longer culpable for the deeds of the evildoer.

With these principles established, I propose that a vote for a marginally pro-life candidate, under certain circumstances, is (at the very least) an instance of informal, mediate cooperation with evil and corresponds most closely to the principle of double-effect outlined above. Consider the conditions: Is a vote for a marginally pro-life candidate, in this case George W. Bush, an intrinsic evil? No. There is, after all, no commandment that says, "Thou shalt not vote for George Bush." But does my vote for George Bush make me complicit in abortions that he deems acceptable? Once again, the answer is no, for this case constitutes an informal, mediate cooperation at best. In voting for Bush our intention is to *save* lives (thus placing it in the informal cooperation category). Nor will our vote directly result in the death of any children (thus the cooperation is not immediate). George W. Bush will not directly kill any unborn children. Abortion law is permissive, not dictative (which is why America is not Nazi Germany; there is no government-sponsored pogrom here). Theoretically, the "right" to abortion could be protected without a single abortion taking place.

In fact, most voting falls under the informal mediate cooperation category. If voters treated perfect consistency and goodness as necessary attributes of candidates for office (assuming we each could discover this down to the last detail before they received our vote), virtually every vote we could cast would be sinful. In choosing a political candidate one must weigh a variety of factors. Among those factors, sanctity of life is foremost, and has a priority above all others. But this is not the *only* consideration. For example, if a candidate is anti-abortion, but also a Nazi or Fascist or certifiably insane, then one would have to consider the costs involved in choosing him or her. Another factor is the ability to choose the greatest good in the circumstances, so long as that good does not directly involve us in an evil.

"But," the Judie Brown party might ask, "by protecting the 'right to kill' by law in those cases, isn't Bush cooperating with evil in an illicit way?" It depends. Bush did not create the situation we presently live in. It was handed to him. Thus he must deal with circumstances as they are given. Those circumstances are such that there is virtually no protection for the unborn. In this case he would not be protecting the right to kill the unborn in limited cases, but would be preventing the killing of the unborn in all *but* those cases. If we were living in a time before *Roe v. Wade*, the situation might be different.

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But still, one might say, "Bush does support the 'right' to abortion in some cases, and surely this isn't good." To which one must reply: Of course it isn't, but what are my responsibilities? One responsibility is to achieve the greatest possible good under the circumstances. We live in a regime that protects the right to abortion on demand. How can we best save lives under these circumstances? There is strong reason to believe that a Bush presidency will result in the saving of at least some lives that would otherwise be lost. Note that we are not agreeing to the killing of some to save others. The killing will happen regardless. We are agreeing to the saving of as many lives as we can, and we are willing to tolerate the lesser evil because that is a *reasonable* choice which meets all of the criteria for double-effect above: our object is to save children (a moral good); we do not intend the death of children in the exceptions; we are not saving the children by killing others (remember, they will die regardless); and the saving of the single life is sufficiently proportionate to the necessity.

Is this, then, to justify a horrendous toleration of evil? Wouldn't it be best to remove ourselves entirely from it? No. Living in this world nearly always involves some toleration of evil for the sake of a greater good, or to avoid a greater evil. This principle was set forward by Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa Theologiae* (II-II, q.10, a.11) using the government of God as the archetype: "Human government is derived from the Divine government, and should imitate it. Now although God is all-powerful and supremely good, nevertheless He allows certain evils to take place in the universe, which He might prevent, lest, without them, greater goods might be forfeited, or greater evils ensue. Accordingly in human government also, those who are in authority rightly tolerate certain evils lest certain goods be lost, or certain greater evils be incurred." (Incidentally, both Aquinas and Augustine tolerated prostitution on these grounds.) Of course, government tolerating an evil is not identical to choosing a political candidate, but on examination there is no reason why the same principle should not apply to both cases. Perhaps more to the point is St. Thomas More, recently designated by John Paul II as "patron saint of statesmen." In the *Utopia*, in the context of a dispute over whether the philosopher has the responsibility to offer counsel to kings, the character Thomas More responds with the following:

> If you cannot pluck up bad ideas by the root, or cure long-standing evils to your heart's content, you must not therefore abandon the commonwealth. Don't give up the ship in a storm because you cannot direct the winds. . . . You must strive to influence policy indirectly, urge your case vigorously but tactfully, and thus what you cannot turn to good, you may at least make as little bad as possible. For it is impossible to make everything good unless all men are good, and that I don't expect to see for quite a few years yet.

Of course, there is a point at which temporizing with evil is no longer licit, as when a regime becomes so thoroughly unjust that revolution is required. Few prolifers sincerely believe America has reached this point, however.

As for those who worry that all engagement with the contemporary world implies cooperation with evil, a number of options present themselves. While some are called to engage the world "as it is"—that is, to work within the muddy circumstances in such a way that they can bring out the greatest good—others are called to a more contemplative life, in which they engage the world through prayer and mortification. In so doing, they assist lay persons, who are primarily called to engage the world directly. In addition, still others may judge that under the circumstances politics will not change the world, and thus that they should build small communities which will be "leaven" to the world. Finally, some may choose to engage the world in a symbolic fashion, by sending a message, rather than by temporizing with the circumstances. Thus they might choose to vote for a consistently pro-life candidate who has no chance of winning the election. They may do this because they believe that temporizing under the circumstances will only make things worse and that through their symbolic resistance they are planting a seed that will eventually bear fruit. All of these are legitimate responses to our situation, and it would be foolish to reject any one of them for lack of moral purity. On the contrary, what must be rejected is precisely the view of those who treat their refusal to engage directly with the world as evidence of their own moral superiority. This false conception of ethical purity inappropriately denigrates the tremendous good that Christians are able to achieve in the world through various disparate practices.

Judie Brown and others are to be commended for reminding voters that abortion is always murder, even in so-called exceptions. They are right to challenge prolifers not to become complacent about the horrors of abortion policy in America today. But our common work on behalf of the unborn cannot tolerate divisiveness based on a false understanding of prudence and a misguided quest for moral purity. FT

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American Satyricon

R. R. Reno

We live in what we like to think of as a very sophisticated society. International commerce keeps the economy humming day and night. Silicon chips grease the wheels of calculation and communication. Medical centers are engaged in perpetual expansion as research facilities grow at a furious pace. Life gets more and more complicated. We can buy and sell Eurobonds on our cell phones while watching Monday Night Football at a Mexican theme sports bar owned by a partnership of German orthodontists. We can kill time after yet another United Airlines flight cancellation by sipping latte and reading about treks from Lhasa to the Rongbuk Buddhist monastery at the base of Mount Everest. Yes, our postmodern world is quite remarkable.

If Christians care about evangelism, then surely we need to get our bearings in this strange, postmodern world. If we wish to preach and teach effectively, then we must be clear about where the sharp and double-edged sword of the gospel cuts into the spirit of the age. This is especially important because our own churches are awash in disorienting analysis. Some are eager to convince us that our sophisticated scientific culture just cannot accept the simplistic and mythological worldview of traditional Christianity. Others are certain that the new world of global communication makes us so aware of cultural and religious diversity that the traditional exclusivist claims of Christianity are untenable. Still others drink deeply at the well of literary theory and in an intoxicated reverie announce that old ideas of meaning and truth have been transcended. The essence of Scripture is not the person of Jesus Christ, but its openness to "difference." Most, however, offer a straightforward assessment: our postmodern world is so very, very complex that the traditional forms of Christian preaching and teaching must be updated and revised. I can hear the sound bite now: "We need a message that speaks to the Internet Age."

But these approaches to contemporary challenges of evangelism are wrongheaded. Each interprets the difficulties we face as the result of new facts. Somehow, scientific discoveries and the global village of instant communication make Christianity less plausible, as if the invention of the Internet poses sudden spiritual difficulties for Christian teaching. Somehow, new theoretical and philosophical fashions alter the landscape of consciousness, as if our minds are so much flotsam and jetsam pressed forward by the surging flood of cultural change. Somehow, the mere fact of social and technological complexity overwhelms the presumptive simplicity of old-fashioned Christianity, as if human beings were ruminating animals without a care in the world before the advent of cellular phones and cable TV.

No, these approaches will not do. Instead, I propose another. The challenges facing Christian evangelism are not scientific, they are not technological, they are not philosophical or cultural in any theoretical or abstract sense. Instead, our challenges are moral and religious. The spirit of the age is, after all, *spiritual*. My goal, then, is to analyze these moral and spiritual challenges, for they, and not the remarkable changes on the surface of our society, shape the real task of evangelism.

We are frequently told a story about modernity that emphasizes Promethean ambition. The high labors of freedom, the noble quest for equality, the rigors of critical thought are all championed as great achievements of the human spirit. In many cases, this

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story is accurate. Seminal modern figures were extraordinarily confident. For Rousseau, the human desire to integrate duty and sensibility was unquenchable, and for Kant, the nobility of the moral law was undeniable. Though unsentimental and often ruthless, both Hegel and Marx believed in the benevolent march of history toward a crowning humanism. John Stuart Mill and Bertrand Russell never underestimated the depths of human ignorance and irrationality, but both retained confidence in the integrity of reason and the triumphant power of argument. They differed from each other in many ways, but nonetheless they held in common a confident hope. Our humanity, however understood, provides the sufficient basis for the highest good.

This confidence in human potency and potential defines modern humanism, and it creates a field of moral concerns that is shaped by two centers of gravity. The first is preoccupied with the creative potential of human agency. We have the spark of justice within, and the proper spiritual labor assigned to us is that of liberation. We must break down the constraining barriers that limit individuality and self-expression. Here, modernity is given over to the redemptive project of freedom. The other center of gravity is more cautious, but it is equally influential. This moral sensibility seeks to weigh evidence and avoid error. Quiet and uncoerced debate yields reliable truths, and our job is to resist the temptations of passionate excess and restrain foolhardy illusion. More skeptical and less speculative, this cautious humanism counsels moderation. We must be careful to tether our lives to secure and reliable anchors. We must build upon a firm and stable foundation.

The great American prophet Ralph Waldo Emerson penned epigrams that capture the ambition of the first aspect of modern humanism—its redemptive project—and they certainly challenge Christian principles. Against the obedient discipline of *imitatio Christi*, Emerson claimed that "imitation is suicide." Against the self-condemning introspection of St. Augustine's repentant autobiography, Emerson substituted the affirmative principle, "Trust thyself." Against the hierarchy of creature and Creator, Emerson insisted that "nothing is sacred but the integrity of your own mind." Against the penitential imperative, Emerson interjected, "I do not wish to expiate, but to live." Against reliance upon a faith once delivered, Emerson stated that "the centuries are conspirators against the sanity and authority of the soul." At every turn, Emerson is a brilliant strategist of the Promethean ambition of modernity. We must throw off the chains that bind, especially our psychic bondage to social and moral expectation, and then live in freedom according to the pure dictates of personal conscience.

Empiricists such as John Locke support the other side of modern humanism—its more cautious approach. For Locke, mental life is riven with prejudice and instability. The project of philosophy is to identify simple ideas that promise to remain stable, and, on this basis, to rebuild intellectual life. In this effort, however, the true philosopher recognizes limits. As Locke writes, "It becomes the modesty of philosophy not to pronounce magisterially where we want that evidence that can produce knowledge." Here, a skeptical temper moderates dogmatic tendencies. We should withhold assent to propositions unsupported by evidence. The goal, however, is not to propagate doubt for its own sake. Instead, for Locke and subsequent generations of empiricists, the purpose of the critical temper is to create social and psychic space for the incremental progress of scientific inquiry. Only if we release some of the pressure of traditional faith, only if we step back from the highly charged atmosphere of speculation and dogma, can we engage in the dispassionate and free exchange of ideas that leads to genuine and reliable intellectual results.

Together, a zeal for freedom and a cool empiricism have nourished the modern spirit, and for both our humanity takes pride of place. For redemptive humanists such as Emerson, once liberated from the dead hand of dogma, our humanity would be the creative and bountiful source of moral insight. For cautious humanists such as Locke, if we use critical doubt to reduce the demands of prejudice and social convention, then we can undertake the painstaking and slow process of empirical inquiry. In both cases, human power displaces divine power as the source of hope. Emerson's hot passion and Locke's sweet reason guide us toward fulfillment. We are to break from traditional authority in order to release ourselves from hindering fetters, and in so doing, we will accelerate the natural human push toward freedom and truth.

It should come as no surprise that Christianity has at times seen fit to do battle with modern humanism. After all, for Christians God comes first, not us. We must serve Him in order to attain freedom. His truth shall judge the minds of men, and His Word leads to all truth. Far from a hindering fetter, the authority of the gospel is the engine that drives us toward fulfillment. In spite of this obvious conflict, modern Christianity has not opposed modern humanism in every respect, and for good reason. The modern defense of individuality echoes the Christian confidence that God calls each of us by name. The new birth promised in baptism is not at all alien to Emerson's hope that we might disentangle ourselves from the cruel weight of the past. Justification by faith also turns us away from expiation and toward "life." Furthermore, like the close reasoning and rigorous argument endorsed by Locke, Christianity teaches doctrines as claims of truth, and not as nuggets of meaning. They possess public solidity and personal

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force. Against willfulness and inveterate human self-delusion, faith involves disciplining the mind to conform to the God-given facts. Like the empiricist, the theologian must serve that which is given.

In both cases, whether ambitious or cautious, modern humanism shares with Christianity an interest in transformative power. Both are champions of change. For Emerson, freedom impels, for the restless divine spark of individuality always seeks full expression. He hopes for a time in which the radiance of individuality will illuminate the cosmos. For Locke, facts have force, and our minds receive the impress of their reality, and we should discipline ourselves to believe accordingly. Christianity preaches neither Emersonian freedom nor Lockean empiricism, but the gospel also has potency to convert minds and change lives. The power of the cross transforms sinner into saint. For this reason, modern humanism and Christianity share a love of power and a hope for change, and given this common love and common hope, many have sought to re-evangelize modern Western culture by reinterpreting modern humanism and redirecting its account of the power of life toward the properly Christian goal of putting God first. For apologists, the dynamics of freedom and the force of facts properly orbit around the power of the cross, and Emerson and Locke, properly understood, advance the cause of the gospel.

Maybe this attempt to conscript modern humanism to the task of evangelism was helpful. Maybe it was a mistake. The matter is irrelevant for us today. The tenor of our age, however humanistic in spirit, lacks the Promethean elements that much of modern theology has had to confront. Cultural critique has run amok in our time, undermining our confidence; we no longer imagine ourselves to be heralds of freedom and truth. The voices of condemnation and the calls to repentance no longer challenge our confident humanism; we hear such demands in the echo chambers of therapeutic consciousness.

After Freud, conscience cannot stand against social authority, for the two are intertwined. Individuality remains a cherished ideal, but the multicultural agenda threatens to submerge it in a morass of race, class, and gender. For all our humanistic faith, we are not great believers in the intrinsic goodness and integrity of human nature. We shrink from the harsh disciplines that might shape our souls, even the humanistic disciplines of authenticity and rational inquiry. We need years of therapy in order to overcome self-doubt, and even then, our acquired sense of self-trust is fragile. Still further, we worry about ideology and wring our hands over the inevitable cultural limitations that undermine our quest for knowledge. The specter of patriarchy is everywhere; everything depends upon one's perspective. In all this, the effect is not Emersonian ambition or Lockean confidence in reason. Pronouns are changed, symbols are manipulated, critiques are undertaken, but almost always in the spirit of a new conformity that fears imprisonment without cherishing freedom and flees from error without pursuing truth.

In these and many other ways, the outlook of modernity has shifted from ambition and confidence to fear and anxiety. The spirit of the age is no longer self-expressive; it is self-protective. Whether one is a Derridian, a disciple of Foucault, or a student of Heidegger, the very potencies and powers that give human life dynamism and drive are laden with danger. We are all familiar with the postmodern litany. Language is a vessel of power that seeks dominion. Truth claims are tinged with imperial ambition. Technology alienates us from life. Economic dynamism produces rapacious inequality. The slogans of modernity—liberty, equality, and fraternity—may well endure, but they are viewed against a background of menace and not promise. Postmodern culture continues to put humanity first, but it does so in an atmosphere tinged with dread.

Because postmodern culture is essentially defensive, the challenges of evangelism have changed, and the many modern theological strategies of mediation are altogether beside the point. One need not meet the rigorous demands of modern intellectual life when the present age is running in the opposite direction. One need not tailor the gospel to fit the ambitions of freedom if the postmodern soul endeavors to shrink to a point where it will no longer be noticed. But the demise of old challenges gives rise to new ones. Postmodern humanism may not be Promethean, but it most certainly is not Christian either. In order to understand this new humanism, we need to examine its defensive posture. Two features are very much in evidence: a fear of authority and a flight from truth. Both are integral to the strange way in which postmodern culture seeks to serve humanity through negating powers that encourage self-discipline and personal transformation.

The contemporary allergy to authority and flight from truth is certainly familiar to anyone in touch with American culture today. Consider the slogan: "Celebrate diversity!" This platitude is so ubiquitous that it now seems self-evident. Some people are tall, others are short. It would be absurd to require all people to be the same height. Just as people are of different heights, we reason, so also do people have different spiritual sensibilities and needs. It would be absurd, then, to require them to hold the same beliefs or conform to the same moral rules. Even as only a violent attack upon the bodies of individuals would produce a world of people the same height, so also enforced uniformity of belief and practice requires violent assaults upon conscience,

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intellect, and will. Therefore, we must reject all authoritative claims as so many acts of violence.

Of course, Christianity is inevitably caught up in the postmodern flight from authority. As the most powerful force shaping Western culture, Christianity becomes the very essence of the authority against which we must protect ourselves. If we are afflicted with enduring divisions of race and class, then surely Christianity must have a hand in causing this evil. If Western societies subordinate women and deny them public roles, then, again, Christianity is at the root of the problem. The list of particulars is endless, varying in focus according to the interests of critics, but the basic logic is always the same. The authority of tradition must be overthrown, the sacred bonds of loyalty to what has been passed on must be broken, so that we can be released from the oppressive burdens of present power.

Anxieties about the closed circuit of dogma, the exhausting weight of tradition, and the crushing force of institutional authority lead our postmodern culture to the extreme of denying the authority of truth itself. Our efforts to shield ourselves from coercive demand and its violence against individuality make us fear that some proposition, some insight, some conclusion to a syllogism might usurp control over our intellects and our souls. Indeed, I am convinced that if the Vatican were to promulgate a document advising Catholic theologians that 2 + 2 = 4, and that theologians are not to say otherwise if they wish to speak the truth, then journalists would have no difficulty finding any number of sources who would denounce the authoritarian tone of such a directive. Recall, for example, the hue and cry surrounding *Dominus Iesus*, the recent Vatican statement concerning interreligious and ecumenical dialogue. The mere fact that the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith reiterated rather conventional Christian propositions about the uniqueness and necessity of Jesus Christ for salvation was sufficient to touch raw nerves. In the end, the offense is not *what* the Church teaches, but *that* she undertakes to state, with clarity, what is true and what is false.

Such hyperbolic reaction can seem silly. But we should not underestimate the intensity of the postmodern horror at the thought of obedience in any form, a horror that makes the power of truth itself a threat. "Sharing" now smothers debate. God forbid that anyone should formulate a reasoned argument; it might contradict or "marginalize" the experience of others. All sentences must begin with a compulsive ritual preface: "From my point of view. . . ." The truth and falsity of all claims depend upon one's "perspective." Everyone must be affirmed; the views of all must be validated.

Many of my colleagues in philosophy are convinced that this descent into the fog of all-views-are-equally-valid stems from a widespread belief in relativism. We are all, these professors imagine, in the grips of a bad theory of truth, and they spend a great deal of time trying to disabuse their students of this bad theory. The problem, however, is that doing so is ineffective. I can point out to my students that the truth of 2 + 2 = 4 does not, in fact, depend upon anyone's point of view. I can expand upon the objectivity of the natural sciences. I can lecture about the distinction between truth and justification. I can exhort all to recognize that the possibilities of error and prejudice do not make them inevitable.

My efforts are in vain because my students have a fundamentally unreflective commitment to the proposition that all truth is relative. They hold such a view as dogma, not as theory. It is a presupposition, not a conclusion. To be sure, sometimes they use the techniques of cultural critique. Truth claims, they say, are relative to their cultural contexts. If I press the issue and ask them to explain how such a view is consistent with the fact that modern science is practiced in India, Japan, Russia, and the United States, and that scientists go to international conferences and seem to agree with each other about all sorts of things regardless of cultural context, they look at me and shrug. At other times, they deploy sophistic tricks. A student insists that one cannot make nonmathematical claims about mathematics, and this demonstrates that all systems of thought are closed and self-referential. Therefore, truth claims reduce to empty tautology. When I ask him in what sense the proposition that engineers find mathematics useful is a mathematical claim about mathematics, he just looks at me and repeats his conviction. His belief is more certain to him than anything I might say. It is a matter of faith, not evidence or inference.

These experiences in the classroom have convinced me that relativism is not a philosophical theory. It is a spiritual truth, a protective dogma designed to fend off any power that might claim our loyalty. It is a habit of mind that insulates postmodern life from the sober potency of arguments and the force of evidence, from the rightful claims of reason and the wisdom of the past. My students can look me in the eye and insist that one should never impose one's beliefs on others *and* that all truth claims, including, I presume, the moral rigorism of never imposing one's beliefs on others, are relative. Here, our contemporary horror of obedience joins hands with solipsism in order to protect the soul from all demands, rational or otherwise. Here, we come face-to-face with the spirit of our age.

A comparison of this outlook with the approach of modern humanism illustrates the striking shift from outward ambition to inward self-protection. For Kant, the traditional authority of Christian dogma must be

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rejected because it is indefensible. In its place we must put the proper and humanizing authority of the moral law, the truth of which is clear to practical reason, and the consequence of which is to restructure human society so as to respect and promote human dignity. In this way, the criticisms of Christian claims serve an aggressive project. Unjust and wrongful authority must give way to a just and proper authority that will usher in a new age. The false and debilitating authority of dogma must be renounced so that human beings can undertake the revolutions of genuine freedom based upon reason.

My students lack this rebellious spirit. Like so much of postmodern culture, their dispositions are submissive. They respect my authority as a teacher. They do not bridle against what they are told. They accept the fact that they must jump through educational hoops in order to get the professional certification they desire. They do not resent the harsh demands of the marketplace. They accept as a nonnegotiable fact the right of governments to punish, imprison, and make war to protect national interests.

In this sense, their attitude is not Promethean, but it is also not traditional. My students submit to the many demands of postmodern life, but with the knowing wink and sigh of a child raised on a steady diet of critique. They accept limitations, but they keep everything at a distance. This distance and the many spiritual disciplines of postmodern life that deflect and demystify the powers that would penetrate into our lives is the most fundamental form of postmodern humanism. It is a protective distance. In a society socialized to be nonjudgmental, supported by the conviction that all truth is relative, the walls of defense against authority are strong indeed. We can safely navigate the danger of life, detached from the true and everlasting dangers of obedience and commitment, for nothing has the right to make a claim on our souls. Such is postmodern freedom.

Many cultural observers have noticed this spiritual detachment. Usually it is described as postmodern irony. There are many instances of such irony in the postmodern literature. Jacques Derrida's address to the *Société française de philosophie*, "Différance," is a particularly witty performance. What Derrida says about what is written but cannot be heard launches a spiraling series of meditations that culminate in observations about the role of *différance* as the "ground of being." (I must use scare quotes, for in his essay Derrida uses all metaphysical terms ironically.) I will not retrace his dialectical reductions, but will simply report his conclusions. For Derrida, the power that produces meaning and claims of truth "governs nothing, and nowhere exercises authority. . . . Not only is there no kingdom of *différance*, but *différance* instigates the subversion of every kingdom." Roughly translated, Derrida is saying that our world is set in motion by power. Of that there is no doubt. But such power is originless and pointless. The order of things is a "bottomless chessboard on which Being is put into play." There is no beginning or end; there is no purpose or principle by which to regulate or judge the play.

What is so important about Derrida is not the detail of his various literary performances. To imagine that deconstruction offers theoretical insight is to fall victim to just what Derrida mocks. Instead, the most telling aspect of Derrida's work is his spiritual advice. He does not rage against a meaningless cosmos. He does not adopt the young Sartre's existential determination in the face of a godless world, and he certainly does not adopt the older Sartre's strategy of Marxist dogmatism. Instead, Derrida advises us to adopt lightheartedness. We should affirm the bottomless chessboard, he says, with "a certain laughter and a certain step of dance." In short, we should recognize that deconstruction, whatever that finally means in terms of theoretical commitments and interpretive performances, yields spiritual freedom. Nothing can sustain the burden of ultimate meaning or final truth, and therefore, nothing can rightfully put demands upon our souls.

In the hands of moralistic American critics, Derrida's work can take on ponderous significance. "Logocentrism" oppresses, and somehow "difference" liberates. The old humanism mixes with the new, and messianic theorists imagine that the critical sophistication of postmodernism more effectively clears the ground for the proper demands of freedom and justice. However, Derrida's spiritual advice is far more widely followed than either the preaching of his moralistic disciples or the theoretical twists and turns of his semiological method. To be sure, few break into laughter and a dance. The stress and strain of postmodern life leaves little time for such indulgences. Nonetheless, the postmodern world cherishes the spiritual freedom that Derrida rightly identifies as the fruit of deconstruction. Ironic detachment, the smirk of critical tropes, the serene complacency made possible by the dogmatic belief that all truth is relative: these and other habits of mind keep our souls free from the disturbing need to change.

We should forswear conspiracy theories. Whatever we might imagine that Derrida represents—cynical French intellectual life, decadent academic self-indulgence, ruthless Nietzschean will-to-power—none of these things have caused or even influenced the world in which I live and work. My students certainly lack any knowledge of Derrida, and they could not begin to recapitulate the arguments of postmodern literary theory. Yet, they are surprisingly close to his conclusions. Their relativism is painfully unsophisticated, but it serves the same purpose as Derrida's elaborate theoret-

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ical machinery. Their dogmatic conviction that truth is not really possible serves to promote spiritual freedom. Of course we must live according to countless rules. Yet, guided by the therapy of critique and buttressed by a dogmatic relativism, the chessboard is bottomless. In such a world, delicious irony keeps us afloat.

If I am correct in reading the signs of the times, then the spirit of our postmodern age is Petronian, not Promethean, and this has important implications for how we preach the gospel. Petronius was an enigmatic Roman who lived during the time of Nero. His notorious observations of Roman life come down to us in the *Satyricon*, a rambling narrative that is part soap opera, part *National Enquirer*, and part serenely detached social description. In the *Satyricon*, Petronius is a participant who stands at one remove. He is an observer who can mock and satirize. He can describe venality without judgment; he can narrate vice without protest.

In these ways, Petronius exemplifies the spiritual ideal that now dominates postmodern Western culture. He creates a pervasive atmosphere of superficiality that drains all spiritual significance from events. His characters are realistic, yet they are spectral, soulless creatures who utterly lack gravity. Never moralistic, never interjecting with the voice of some loftier vision, Petronius simply drains all power from social life. It is not sufficiently real, not sufficiently thick and weighty, to disrupt the equilibrium of the soul. For this reason, as both writer and participant, Petronius is in the world, but not of it. Yet his freedom has nothing to do with the ascetical disciplines that detach the Christian from the world. Instead, Petronius enjoys a spiritual freedom similar to the dance and laugh advocated by Derrida. It is the freedom that comes from the confidence that there is no Lord of life—from the wry certainty that the world is carried forward on the currents of instinct, venality, and conceit.

The modern theological tradition is keyed to the challenges of Promethean ambition, not the Petronian apathy that prevails today. We are the inheritors of that tradition, and as a consequence, we respond to the postmodern age inappropriately. Cynicism can indeed seem like a gain for the gospel; after all, the New Testament counsels Christians to take a jaundiced view of worldly wisdom. Furthermore, irony can appear to be an ally, for the postmodern reluctance to adopt the old humanistic projects, whether Emersonian or Lockean, with wholehearted vigor suggests a newfound humility. Finally, the willing conformity that characterizes so much of postmodern life can give the evangelist hope that the prideful self-sufficiency of modernity has finally exhausted itself. These are, however, deceptions made possible by a fixation on pride as the primary barrier to faith. But sloth and cowardice are just as deadly. Both slink away from the urgency of conviction. Both fear the sharp edge of demand and expectation. Both have a vested interest in cynicism, irony, and outward conformity. These vices, not pride, now dominate our culture.

What do the vices of sloth and cowardice mean for evangelism in the postmodern context? How does our Petronian humanism and its commitment to spiritual freedom shape the challenges of preaching and teaching the gospel in our age? I am a university professor who observes his students and tries to orient himself in the increasingly strange landscape of this third millennium. I am not engaged in pastoral work, at least not in the primary sense of ordering the community of the faithful in worship. Nonetheless, in my own pedagogy, I am constantly trying to penetrate the defenses of irony; I am always attempting to bridge the seemingly depthless chasms of critique. Furthermore, I am more a child of this age than I would like to admit. Petronius is closer kin than Prometheus, and to the extent that I know my own resistances to the gospel, I have some small insights into the pastoral challenges. Therefore, I will venture a brief observation.

No moderation of the demands of the gospel will satisfy the postmodern spirit. Promising quiescent freedom from the disturbances of expectations and demands, our age nurtures no hope in the human heart. For this reason, it will interpret any gospel of redemption as an offense, no matter how carefully modulated, no matter how cleverly dressed up in the finery of modern ideals of freedom and rational responsibility. Therefore, evangelism has no reason to hide the hard demands of the gospel.

John Paul II is a signal example in our own time. *Veritatis Splendor*, which focuses on moral theology, warns against the dangers of moral relativism and subjectivism. What is striking about the encyclical, however, is not its polemic. It is rather the extraordinary view of freedom it advances—a view utterly at odds with the spiritual freedom so cherished by our age. The encyclical ends with a meditation on the Virgin Mary. She is commended as the exemplar of Christian freedom. Called to serve the Lord with body and soul, she gave herself in obedience to a demand the scope and import of which she did not understand. For John Paul II, the Virgin Mary is the model of Christian moral obedience because she has the courage to accept those disciplines and sacrifices that do not just yield a freedom *from* sin, but a freedom *for* supernatural life. Only by taking the severe and dangerous risks of obedience to something beyond our comprehension can we have the freedom to participate in divine glory.

As a consequence, Christian freedom requires a spiritual ambition that is very much at odds with the postmodern age. Such ambition does not throw up protec-

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tive walls to block the demands of the gospel. Instead, this spiritual ambition forsakes prerogatives, renounces the rights and privileges of intellect and will. All defenses to the transforming power of grace are removed, even those which emerge out of the rightful worries we all have about dominion and deception. Only in this way, says John Paul II, can we draw near to the power of life. After all, Christian ambition is supernatural precisely because it seeks to become more than that which human power can produce. The moral challenge of evangelism is, then, to nurture an ambition that has the courage of obedience, the courage to draw as near as possible to redemptive power by removing lines of defense.

This can be done in any number of ways, but I wish to end with a challenging proposition—namely, that the slothfulness and defensiveness of Petronian humanism can be confronted most effectively by daring it to question the most cherished, most morally sanctified, and most Petronian moral commitment of the postmodern age: sexual freedom. The issue of sexual freedom is crucial precisely because it is so automatically and unreflectively affirmed. God forbid that my needs might be stymied, my impulses denied. God forbid that I should have to submit the raw material of my life to God so that I might be melted down and reformed into something very different. God forbid that I should have to change. We defend ourselves against chastity, not because we are prideful and self-confident hedonists, not because we take great joy from the confusing labyrinths of sexual desire and satisfaction, but because we are fearful that, once the invasion of grace begins, it will not relent until the capitol falls. We embrace sexual freedom because it is a crucial line of defense against a whole range of transformative demands.

As St. Augustine knew, if we can change this altogether fundamental part of our lives—a part woven into the fabric of instinct—then the defenses against redemptive change are down. If the perfectly normal and natural needs of the body can be directed toward God, then surely the higher faculties of will and intellect can as well. If something so "impossible" is, indeed, possible, then who knows what might happen next?

My students may not know Derrida, but they are not fools. They well know that the imperative of Christian chastity is a direct assault on what is forbidden by the Petronian humanism of our postmodern age: allowing ideals to enter into our souls in order to reshape our identities. It is a direct assault upon our spiritual freedom, but not because it involves restraint and limitation. I must reiterate. My students know and accept the many restraints society imposes upon them. The surfaces of their lives bear all the marks of aesthetic, hygienic, and economic discipline. No, chastity is an assault from which they recoil in horror because, to the twenty-year-old mind, it is so insanely ambitious, so hopelessly impossible, so ruthlessly physical *and* personal.

At this point, my students may understand next to nothing about the Christian ascetical tradition, its goals and methods, or about the relation between self-denial and God's intentions for our salvation. These are matters I am not sure that I understand. But of this I *am* sure. In their recoil from chastity, they have difficulty maintaining Petronian equilibrium. It is difficult to contemplate chastity with "a laugh and a step of dance," for none of us can discipline lust at a distance from ourselves. We cannot cool the boiling cauldron with the wink and nod of irony. This is why sexual freedom is the functional center of postmodern politics, morality, and culture. At this center point, the increasingly alien and ambitious teachings of Christianity must cut like a sharp and two-edged sword, or they cut not at all. FT

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Books In Review

Evangelicalism, With and Without Reformation

American Evangelical Christianity: An Introduction. By Mark A. Noll. *Blackwell. 320 pp. $29.95 paper.*

Reviewed by **Ralph C. Wood**

With the death of Sydney Ahlstrom and the retirements of Robert Handy and Martin Marty from the classroom, Mark Noll has surely become our leading teacher-historian of American Christianity. George Marsden may be his superior in charting the history of American fundamentalism and the Christian involvement in education, but Noll's work is more encyclopedic, as is evidenced by his authoritative work of 1992, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada.* This latest book, *American Evangelical Christianity,* a collection of previously published essays reshaped into a sustained argument, demonstrates yet again the impeccability of Noll's scholarship. His careful mastery of the historian's craft, his massive bibliographical knowledge, his clarity of style and civility of approach—all these serve to answer his own complaints about the "scandal of the evangelical mind." Noll has an evangelical mind that, far from being small and closed, is both capacious and generous. Hence his rightly honored place at the international table of scholarship in religious history.

Noll concedes that it is notoriously difficult to define his subject. What Wittgenstein said about the aroma of coffee can also be said of evangelicalism: everyone knows it exists, but no one can precisely describe it. Wags have declared that an evangelical is anyone who likes Billy Graham. Noll, more helpfully, pares the leading evangelical characteristics down to three: a radically life-reorienting experience before God; an unabashed priority given to the Bible—especially its cross-centered gospel—as the one authoritative rule for faith and practice; and an adaptive engagement with the surrounding culture. It is this last item, of course, that issues in things both good and evil. On the one hand, it gives evangelicalism—especially in its pentecostal expression—a vitality that makes it the most rapidly expanding form of Christianity today. Yet, on the other, these very same cultural adaptations also bring compromises and corruptions that threaten the very integrity of the faith for which evangelicals are such ardent exponents.

Together with Nathan Hatch and many other historians, secular and Christian alike, Noll has been insisting for many years that there has never been any such thing as a Christian America. Here again he reiterates the point that the American founding was a notably secular event. It was accomplished—for the most part, and contrary to conservative myth—by deistic Episcopalians who believed neither in original sin nor in Israel and Christ as God's unique provisions for the world's salvation. Benjamin Franklin's celebrated motion for prayer at the climax of the Constitutional Convention was in fact not passed, and the orison itself was not prayed, at least not in public. Nor did the cultural hegemony of evangelicals begin with the Great Awakening of the 1740s. As Noll crisply notes, this infusion of religious fervor into American life "was more successful at ending Puritanism than inaugurating evangelicalism."

It was the frontier revivals of the 1770s and 1780s, Noll demonstrates, that marked the real emergence of the voluntarist, individualist, and sectarian kind of Protestantism that we know as evangelicalism. These new and distinctively American Christians did indeed embrace and adopt—though they did not inaugurate and inspire—the essential qualities of the founding: "the democratic, republican, commonsensical, liberal, and providential conceptions by which the founders had defined America." The result, for the first six decades of the nineteenth century, was a thoroughgoing alignment of American Protestantism with the American political project. A country once ruled by Congregationalists, Episcopalians, and Presbyterians was now dominated, at least religiously, by Methodists and Baptists.

The moralistic zeal of their revivalism seemed to find its perfect echo in the ethical seriousness required by democratic principles. Non-Christian politicians such as Thomas Jefferson saw, in turn, that republican government could not flourish without citizens of sterling character. Church-state separation in politics thus made for church-state symbiosis in religion. Government provided the liberty and space for evangelical Christians to express what Noll calls their "strong communal sense . . . through voluntary organization of churches and parachurch special-purpose agencies," i.e., Sunday schools, aid endeavors for the poor, missionary enterprises, publishing houses, etc. Noll cites the massive involvement of evangelicals in the sectional antagonisms prior to the Civil War as proof that they had learned to make public use of their state-granted freedom of religion. Yet such engagement with American culture proved, all too predictably, to have sectional as well as religious motivations. Evangelical loyalties to region shaped evangelical responses to slavery, as adaptability yet again revealed its double character.

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The result of this unhappy division, as Noll reports, is that black Protestants have remained mainly on the margins of evangelical existence. This fact is both ironic and sad. Noll's statistics reveal that most black Protestants are imbued with the same warmhearted, Bible-centered, culturally adaptive faith that characterizes other evangelicals. Fifty-two percent of them give at least a tithe to their churches, 86 percent believe that miracles still occur, and 83 percent pray at least once daily. Though these figures are higher than those registered among white Christians of all kinds, black evangelicals have remained segregated by social attitudes and religious customs, unable to teach their white counterparts the most salutary of lessons. Noll states the matter simply and clearly: "Black Christians are the ones who have experienced the cross most dramatically in American history." This experience of radical suffering also informs Negro spirituals, making them a permanent and powerful legacy to American Christianity. As Noll points out in his fine chapter on evangelical hymns, there is no color or class or gender line running through a gospel song such as Thomas A. Dorsey's "Precious Lord."

AFTER THE FAILURE of William Jennings Bryan to garner a national political majority, and especially with the public ignominy he won for his cause at the Scopes trial of 1925, white evangelicals became politically quiescent until the 1970s. Their influence in American public life was largely muted by the fundamentalist controversy in theology and the anti-evolutionist animus in education. Noll is at considerable pains to show that evangelicals have not been simpletons, at least until recently, about either science or theology. From Cotton Mather in the seventeenth century to Charles Hodge and B. B. Warfield in the nineteenth, most evangelical theologians were enthusiasts for science. They understood it largely as "a methodological commitment to observation, induction, rigorous principles of falsification, and a scorn for speculative hypotheses." These theologians sought to use science in order to defend the veracity of the Bible and to establish a Christian worldview. Thus did they regard both nature and Scripture as great storehouses of unvarnished empirical facts. Any fair-minded observer, employing the disinterested powers of reason, could ascertain these facts, and then assemble them into a coherent order that proved the truth of the Christian religion.

Historical critics of Scripture soon began to dispute the factuality of many biblical events, even as scientists began to make totalizing antireligious claims about the naturalist and materialist character of the universe. Noll laments the resulting "wars of science and religion," especially as they have been fought by proof-texting creationists on the right and by arrogant naturalists on the left. He names Carl Sagan and Stephen Jay Gould as the chief offenders among the latter sort. By contrast, Noll praises the historical efforts of Ronald Numbers and David Livingstone, as well as the scientific work of Michael Behe and William Dembski, for challenging the standard secular accounts of evolution. Noll hails postmodernist thinkers of whatever stripe who acknowledge the context-dependent character of both science and religion: "They have succeeded in showing as clearly as humanly possible that no capital-S science and no capital-R religion exist beyond the bounds of space and time or the boundaries of personal and communal existence."

Noll strikes a similarly mediating stance in his assessment of Billy Graham. Until recently, Graham was the sole evangelical to gain large public attention. Noll lauds him for preaching nothing other than the central conversionist doctrine of redemption through the cross and resurrection of Christ alone. Not only has Graham avoided the sexual and monetary scandals that have often brought shame upon the evangelical cause; he also has shrewdly "traded angularity for access." By condemning generic rather than specific sin,

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Graham has been able to address men and women of every kind and condition with the glad tidings of the gospel. Thus did Graham become, in Noll's estimate, "one of the most powerful forces for Christian ecumenicity ever seen."

It is not surprising that, in his constructive chapters, Noll urges evangelicals to adopt a mediating political theology that lapses into "neither a world-denying pessimism nor a redemption-denying immanentism." Noll's own theological "realism" has a decidedly Niebuhrian cast. Not within this world can "Christian ideals" ever be fully realized, so inveterately ingrained is the human bent toward sinfulness. It behooves evangelicals neither to demonize their political enemies nor to divinize their own political pronouncements. The deeply paradoxical double-sidedness of nearly every Christian doctrine indicates, for Noll, that all political judgments must be at once local and universal and unavoidably complex. He therefore praises the mediating spirit of Canadian evangelicals for leavening their culture with the yeast of Christianity: "Where in Canada evangelical connections with politics have often moderated extremes, in the United States they have more regularly exacerbated extremes."

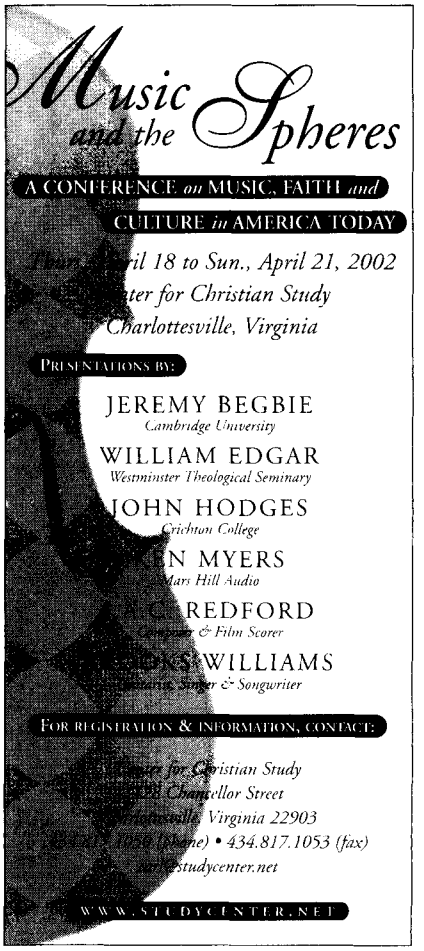
Though Mark Noll's own moderation has won him an honored place in the pluralist public square, his inclusion there risks a scandal of its own—the scandal, namely, of muting the gospel's offensiveness, its necessary disjunction with all cultures and nations. It is a fair question, I believe, to ask whether evangelicals have made a deadly error in adapting Christian faith to the basic American assumption that to be free is to be a sovereign individual unencumbered by any aims or attachments that we have not elected for ourselves, nor by obligations to any communities that we have not autonomously chosen to join.

These voluntarist notions often cause evangelicals to violate the radically obediential and communal character of Christian faith. Thus did Dietrich Bonhoeffer complain in the fateful year of 1939 that, despite their admirable "multiplicity of Christian insights and communities," American Protestant churches suffered from a lack of Reformation in the upper case. He feared that the churches' acceptance of the private sphere allotted to them by the state had robbed them of their power to give public embodiment to the often offensive truth of the gospel. Perhaps if Bonhoeffer were living today, he would add the adjective "evangelical" to his stark warning that "denominations are not Confessing Churches."

To be a confessing church is to be drastically unadaptive about its allegiance to the God of Israel and Jesus Christ. As the Barmen Declaration makes clear, it is to reject all "other events and powers, figures and truths, as God's revelation." Thus do we still need from Noll a sharp critique of such sub-Reformation adaptations as Billy Graham's three baptisms, his virtual adulation of Ronald Reagan, his immunity to real religious doubt, and especially his decisionist and non-sacramental brand of revivalism. It would have also been good to hear that, even if the advocates of Design Theology eventually prove that nature operates not by an unsponsored and undirected evolutionary process but by an intelligent Shaper, their discovery would still constitute a far-off echo of the scandalously self-identifying and kingdom-creating God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jesus Christ.

Noll praises evangelicals such as Charles Colson, J. I. Packer, and George Carey for seeking doctrinal solidarity with Roman Catholics. Yet there is much that evangelicals have also to learn from the patristic tradition. Here the recent books of evangelicals Robert Webber and Daniel Williams—on our need to recover the Church's witness during the first five centuries—serve as important supplements to Noll's work. I believe that evangelicals must also begin asking hard questions about authoritative ecclesial offices and social teachings. The present Pope's encyclicals, for example, have served—like nothing possessing similar authority within the evangelical world—to help Catholics resist the demands of our consumerist culture of convenience as well as the omnicompetent nation-state that undergirds it.

Surely the paradox articulated many years ago by Rabbi Manfred Vogel applies equally well to evangelicals: "While America has been good for Jews," said Vogel, "it has been bad for Judaism." Liberal democracy has offered evangelical Christians,



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together with Jews and many others, an unprecedented economic, educational, and political freedom, and for this gift we bow in great gratitude. But we have also baptized its church-subverting vices, especially its individualist and voluntarist notions of Christian existence. Hence our clamant need to answer the scandalous and anti-adaptive call to upper-case Reformation. It remains God's summons not to evangelical Protestants alone but, as Bonhoeffer said, to the entire Body of Christ.

The Limits of Pluralism

PLURALISM IN PHILOSOPHY: CHANGING THE SUBJECT. By JOHN KEKES. *Cornell University Press. 225 pp. $32.50.*

***Reviewed by* Christopher Wolfe**

JOHN KEKES HAS written a book that will provoke readers. It will stir up their interest, lead them through many interesting questions and arguments, and then, unfortunately, leave them disappointed.

Kekes, inspired by a Cartesian-like dissatisfaction with previous philosophy and its impasses, aims "to change philosophical thinking." Our time may be a turning point, he claims, because the disruptions in customary patterns of everyday life that characterize our age have led to widespread doubts about the "absolutist" outlook on the world that is common to "great religions, metaphysical systems, poetic visions, and other overarching, all-inclusive worldviews." He also confronts the relativism that undermines our beliefs concerning what is true and good, and thus our capacity to lead good lives. The alternative to absolutism and relativism is, in his view, the philosophical doctrine of "pluralism," which insists that there are indeed reasonable beliefs about the good and the true, but that they take a plurality of forms.

In the first part of *Pluralism in Philosophy,* Kekes develops a theory that deals "with the disruptions of everyday life that call for modes of reflection, with the natures of these modes, with the perennial philosophical problems that are caused by conflicts among them, and with the pluralistic approach to resolving these problems." The second part of the book applies the theory in order to resolve "five familiar problems that perennially recur in serious thought about good lives: the meaning of life, the possibility of free action, the place of morality in good lives, the art of life, and the nature of human self-understanding."

In Part I, Kekes is largely concerned with how we deal with disruptions of everyday life by developing various approaches to understanding it, including (the list is not exhaustive) science, history, religion, morality, aesthetics, and subjectivity. Each of these modes of reflection generalizes its particular features and proposes to understand the world as a whole in those terms. And each genuinely apprehends the significance of various facts and can accommodate some of the facts described by other approaches. But all of them fail to accommodate the significance of certain highly important aspects of the world. Advocates of each approach believe it should override all the others, but, in fact, no one approach can provide "a true understanding of the world in its totality."

Kekes sorts through arguments of absolutists and relativists and finds both sides unconvincing. On the one hand, the absolutists cannot make good on their claim that one approach provides the true understanding of the significance of all facts. On the other hand, the skeptical relativists overcompensate for this deficiency by recommending that we

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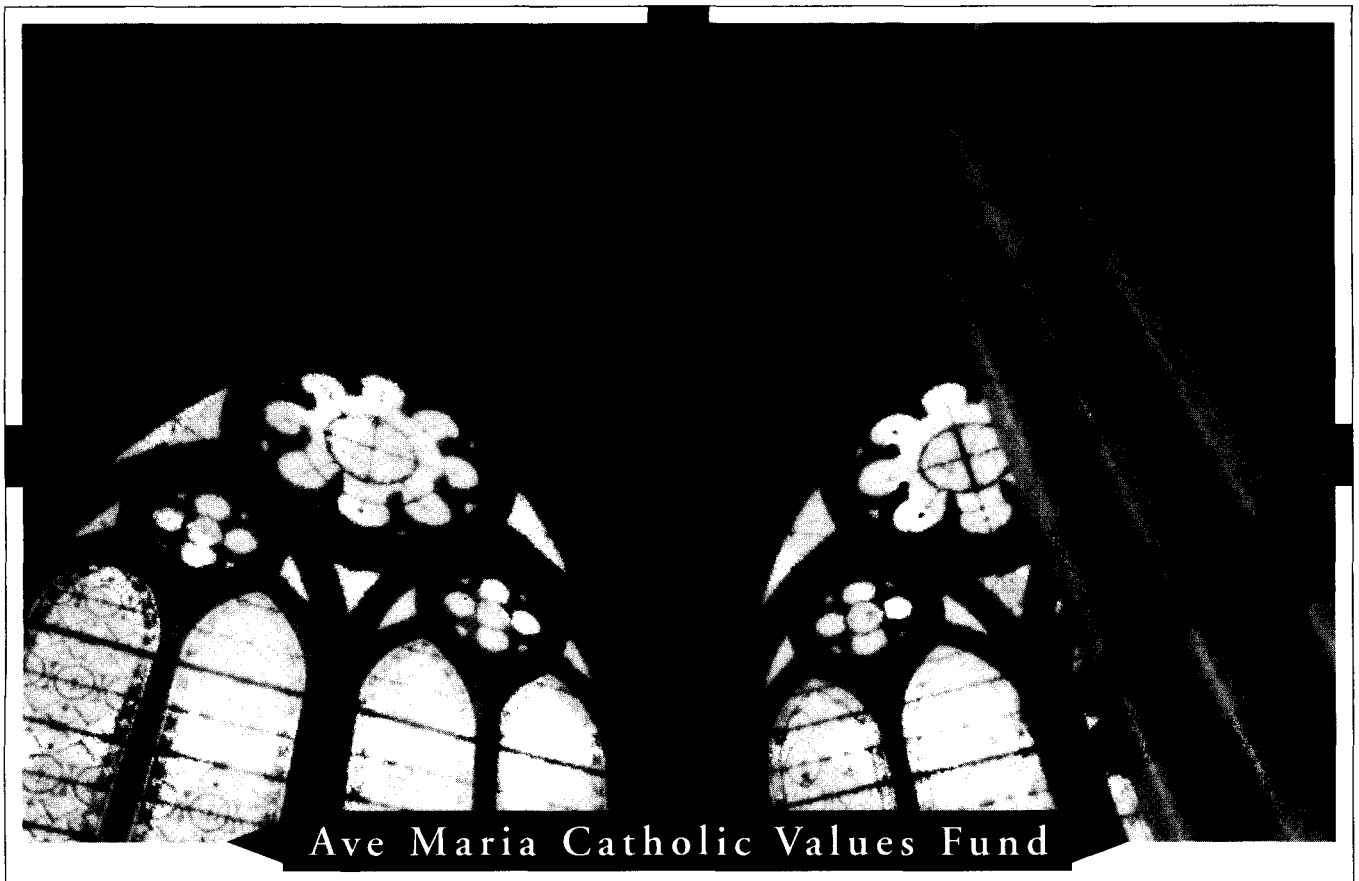

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abandon reflection on facts altogether; this is a mistake, both because not reflecting on the world is a psychological impossibility and because we cannot cope with the disruptions of everyday life without reflection. Kekes wants to offer a third possibility—the pluralistic approach—by "changing the subject"—that is, by showing that if philosophical problems are reframed, a solution is possible. In Kekes' words, "Philosophical problems have rational solutions, but they are not general solutions because there is no such thing as the one true account of the significance of the facts."

PLURALISTS, ACCORDING TO Kekes, want to provide deeper understandings than relativism permits. Absolutists want depth but their search is misdirected, because they think that below the surface there is unity, when in fact there is deeper diversity. In contrast, for pluralists, "depth consists in . . . giving up all hope for an intellectual resting place from which everything could be explained and which is secure from reasonable challenges. It is to take seriously the implications of Nietzsche's dictum that God is dead. Absolutists, by contrast, continue to hope for this mythical resting place, even though the finest minds have failed innumerable times to find it." Pluralism "abandons the doomed search for a solution that holds for one and all" and instead looks for rationality and truth in particular solutions for particular occurrences of many philosophical problems. The key is to ask which mode of reflection is more likely to be helpful in coping with a particular disruption in a particular context.

The first part of the book sparks some interest in readers oriented toward classical and Christian thought, largely because of Kekes' rejection of relativism and his assumption that it is possible and desirable to know about the conditions of good lives. However, the author's easy dismissal of not only positivism, Marxist historicism, romanticism, and egoism, but also of Plato, Old Testament moralism, and Protestant fundamentalism should raise serious concerns.

In Part II, Kekes applies his pluralism to five perennial philosophical problems, and when he does, we discover that those initial doubts about the theory were justified. I will examine only his first example: the philosophical problem of the meaning of life (which includes Kekes' rejection of religion).

On the meaning of life, Kekes argues that both the religious and moral approaches are inadequate. Kekes dismisses the religious appeal to transcendent order because, he claims, we have no access to whatever might transcend the natural order. While there are events we cannot explain, calling them miracles would be to go beyond the evidence. There are thus "no rationally defensible answers" about what exists external to the natural world, and, while religious questions are not uninteresting or illegitimate, religious answers are inevitably arbitrary.

The core of truth in Kekes' analysis is that there is no rationally *demonstrative* argument that proves faith (which, otherwise, would not be faith, but knowledge). But there's a world of difference between there being "no rationally demonstrative" and "no rationally defensible" answers to questions about a transcendent order. While it is true that there might be a natural explanation for an event that we can't explain, a "miraculous" explanation might be more rationally plausible than a not-yet-discovered "natural" explanation, e.g., in the case of a crucified man rising from the dead. (This approach to evaluating the "motives of credibility" for

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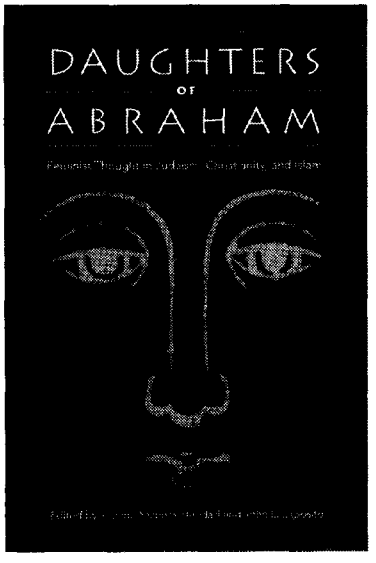
faith is especially convincing, I think, if one takes Newman's approach, in *Grammar of Assent*, of achieving moral certitude through converging and concurring probabilities.)

But Kekes goes further, to claim that even if we could make statements about the transcendent order we would have little basis on which to conclude that that order is good. Here he argues that for every good feature of the natural world from which we infer the goodness of the transcendent order, there are bad features that undermine that goodness.

But the existence of evil in the world does not require us to think that the transcendent order is, or itself contains, evil. Physical evils may not be evils, strictly speaking, if we knew their place in a transcendent order, and many physical evils, as well as moral evils, may be explained by acts of free will. However true it may be that there are no easy or pat answers to the problem of evil, it is also true that it is too easy or pat an answer to the problem of the meaning of life to say that evil makes belief in a transcendent order irrational.

Kekes also rejects what he calls the moral approach to the meaning of life. What gives meaning to life, in this view, is the satisfying pursuit of genuinely good projects. But the moral answer fails, Kekes claims, for



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three reasons. First, good moral projects may be unsatisfying (they may be tedious and painful efforts to do "our duty at the cost of self-sacrifice, self-denial, and frustration of our desires"). Second, moral monsters (e.g., Nazis) can derive great satisfaction and meaning from their immoral projects. Third, many people have found meaning in nonmoral (i.e., morally indifferent) projects.

Kekes' argument that the performance of "tedious and painful" duties may not be satisfying suggests that by "satisfying" he means a mere *feeling* of satisfaction. This would involve, I think, the same mistake many people make in associating Aristotelian "happiness" with a feeling, rather than with an operation of the soul. Similar difficulties emerge when he claims that Nazis and mass murderers have meaningful lives. If having a meaningful life involves more than enjoying a subjective feeling of satisfaction—if it requires an objective component—then the Nazi example doesn't prove anything, except that people can sometimes think they have meaningful lives when they don't.

BUT THE GREATEST problem with Kekes' analysis is the very definition of morality he employs, which he distinguishes from (and opposes to) any relation to a transcendent order. The narrowness of his understanding of morality becomes obvious when he discusses lives dedicated to "nonmoral" projects, which may be "athletic, aesthetic, horticultural, erotic, or scholarly, or . . . may involve collecting, learning languages, traveling, cultivating connoisseurship, inventing ingenious gadgets, and so forth." Only a narrow understanding of morality, I think, would regard these projects as nonmoral. Some of them might be pursued in immoral ways, of course, but in themselves, if properly ordered, they are moral because they involve the pursuit of genuine goods. The (Kantian) separation of the good and the moral undermines Kekes' analysis of the moral mode of reflection.

Kekes argues that the common problem with religious and moral approaches is that they both seek a general answer to the question of the meaning of life when, in fact, "individuals may derive the meaning of their lives from different sources." They achieve meaning by identifying themselves with their projects and in "doing so must reflect the individual differences among their wants, beliefs, capacities, interests, and preferences." Kekes accepts an important implication of this approach: "Immoral or nonmoral lives could have sufficient satisfactions to make them meaningful."

Kekes' pluralism is certainly right in believing that no one specific way of life is the only meaningful way to live. The richness and diversity of goods is such that many ways of life, involving the pursuit and achievement of various goods, are meaningful. But this plurality of meaningful lives rests on the plurality of the good itself; lives not based on any aspect of the good are not meaningful. A meaningful life must mean more than mere subjective satisfaction. Kekes himself seems to realize this at points, as, for instance, when he says that lives can't have meaning if they are "dominated by worthless, pointless, misdirected, trivial, or futile activities" and when he acknowledges that a person's life lacks meaning when he is manipulated into pursuing a project.

Kekes' critique of absolutism is a distorted form of the truth—one well recognized in the classical and Christian philosophies he condemns—that there are many particular human goods, many ways of achieving them, and a need for prudence and a broad range of freedom in pursuing them. He fails to see that a great plurality of goods and ways of instantiating them in a rich diversity of concrete lives is compatible with universal philosophical and religious truths

Kekes claims to resist the temptation of relativism, and at points he clearly invokes principles that many relativists would reject—for instance, that some moral duties override subjective satisfactions, that there are some objective constraints on the pursuit of personal notions of excellence, that self-understanding of one's possibilities and limits must be reasonable, that individual satisfaction cannot rest on self-deception or ignorance. What is unclear is whether he can prevent a slide toward relativism without providing a stronger and clearer ground for those limits—precisely in the "absolutist" forms of thought that he so strenuously and unconvincingly rejects.

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The Book of Marriage: The Wisest Answers to the Toughest Questions. Edited by Dana Mack and David Blankenhorn. *Eerdmans. 625 pp. $30.*

***Reviewed by* Molly Finn**

The Book of Marriage undertakes to provide an overview of one of the greatest human institutions at a time when its future is uncertain. This year, for the first time, fewer than 25 percent of American households consist of a married couple and their children. (Admittedly, the significance of this census finding is disputed.) The number of single-parent households and unmarried couples is increasing. Changes in social, religious, and sexual standards are undermining the traditional belief that marriage is a lifetime commitment. The divorce rate is appallingly high and multiple divorces increasingly frequent, with well-documented severe consequences to an ever larger number of children.

Dana Mack and David Blankenhorn intend *The Book of Marriage* to provide an alternative to inadequate college-level textbooks and marriage-preparation literature which, they say, are intellectually weak, noncommittal on the value of marriage in contemporary society, and rarely address marriage in its cultural, historical, and spiritual dimensions. Their aim is to celebrate the "diversity and essential humanity of the marital experience in a way that is accessible, entertaining, and useful." The editors are not neutral on the value of marriage. By drawing on readings from a wide range of world literature and thought, they hope to convey a sense of the great historical, social, and cultural import of marriage and want their readers to come away from the book understanding that "in marrying, [people] are doing something really big."

To organize the vast array of material needed for this overview, the editors divide the anthology into ten chapters, each asking a big question about a particular aspect of marriage and each presenting a rich collection of readings by novelists, theologians, sociologists, poets, anthropologists, philosophers, and others. The questions asked include: Why get married at all? What are we promising? What about when we fight? What about divorce? Can love last a lifetime? The spectrum of perspectives ranges from Greek drama to Shakespeare to Tol-

Molly Finn *is a (long-married) writer living in New York City.*

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stoy; from St. Paul to Aquinas, Luther, and Maimonides; from Milton to Bill Cosby. Among the many gems are selections from Chinese and Japanese literature, the *Mahabharata*, and various traditions of Western Scripture and theology.

At the end of their introduction, Mack and Blankenhorn write that "it is our firm belief that a successful marriage is in a real sense the finishing school of civic education. Through marriage, after all, we can learn the true meaning of community, of tolerance, of mutual understanding, of responsibility, and of spiritual cultivation—all of the things that make for the kind of society in which the good life is accessible to all." This is an admirable summary of what they have attempted to convey in the readings they have chosen, and to a large extent they have succeeded.

However, they have made a serious mistake in their choice of a subtitle for the book: *The Wisest Answers to the Toughest Questions*. The book has been organized around a series of questions, but for the most part the readings do not—and do not intend to—answer them. There is a wealth of imaginative literature here, all of which offers wise, sometimes witty, sometimes profound observations, illuminating images and metaphors, and material for reflection, but *never* answers. The book's many impressive essays that address the philosophic, cultural, and historic bases of marriage don't provide answers either. Rather than offering solutions, the writers collected in the book explore such issues as loving marriages as the basis of a healthy civic life (Martin Bucer), the subjugation of women, gender inequalities and possible reforms (John Stuart Mill, G. B. Shaw), marriage as a private contract (John Locke), the obligations of the marital promise (Erasmus), and the origins and fundamental elements of marriage (Edward Westermarck). Certain of the theological and scriptural passages do give answers—and instructions—but many of these seem legalistic, dry, and barren. They may once have served to develop and preserve a framework that bolsters marriage as a social and religious ideal; today they are interesting only as relics.

The closest thing to real answers comes in the contributions of the research-based sociologists who write with authority on the subjects they have studied. Essays such as John Gottman's "Seven Principles for Making Marriage Work," Judith Wallerstein's writing on divorce and good

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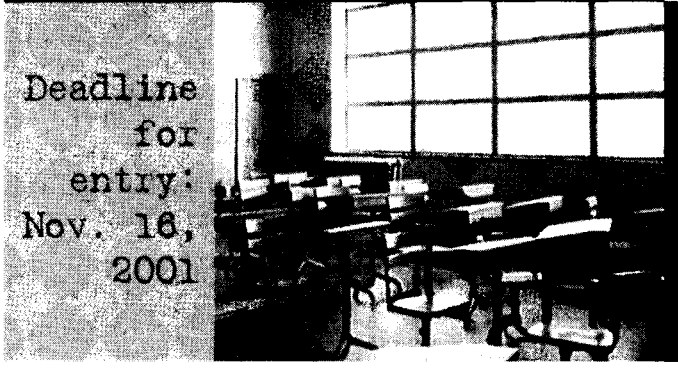

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marriages, and Erik Erikson's reports of his work with the elderly are filled with fascinating facts and testimony that bear the stamp of the passionate involvement the subject demands. There's no arguing with the evidence, and though readers may want to question some of the conclusions, these authors are very persuasive. Wallerstein in particular—with her lively and learned perspective on divorce (especially its effects on children) and good marriages—is one of the stars of this collection.

An additional weakness in the collection arises from an omission. In their introduction, the editors list "the big questions of marriage—questions relating to the nature of marital love, to sexual fulfillment, to money management, gender roles, child rearing, mixed marriage, marital conflict, the death of a spouse, divorce." With one notable exception, each of these questions is explored in one of the ten chapters of the book. The exception is "sexual fulfillment." "Yes, yes," the editors might say, "the importance of that subject goes without saying." Well, it doesn't. The importance of all the other big questions might go without saying too, but it doesn't. It is certainly stated in almost every one of the nonliterary selections in the book that sex, in one way or another, forms the basis of marriage. In many passages it is identified as "conjugal duty," in others it exists solely as the means of procreation. It is a duty, a complicating factor, a danger, a pleasure. Passion is usually relegated to the immature and impulsive, as in the "passionate sexual union of youthful romance."

Contributors who do turn their attention to the importance of sex in marriage recognize it as a constant presence in the marriage relation that enhances the spiritual connection between partners. My husband laughed when I told him that the sexiest reading in the book was the passage in the *Odyssey* when Odysseus returns home after twenty years. To assure herself that this is indeed her husband Penelope devises a test of his identity that brilliantly reveals the secret life of marriage in its solidarity, sexual attachment, understanding, friendship, and shared traditions and habits that are known only to the partners. Literature is filled with comparable fine descriptions and recreations of sexual encounters that are in no way unseemly or inappropriate to the purposes of a book like this one. A straightforward and thought-

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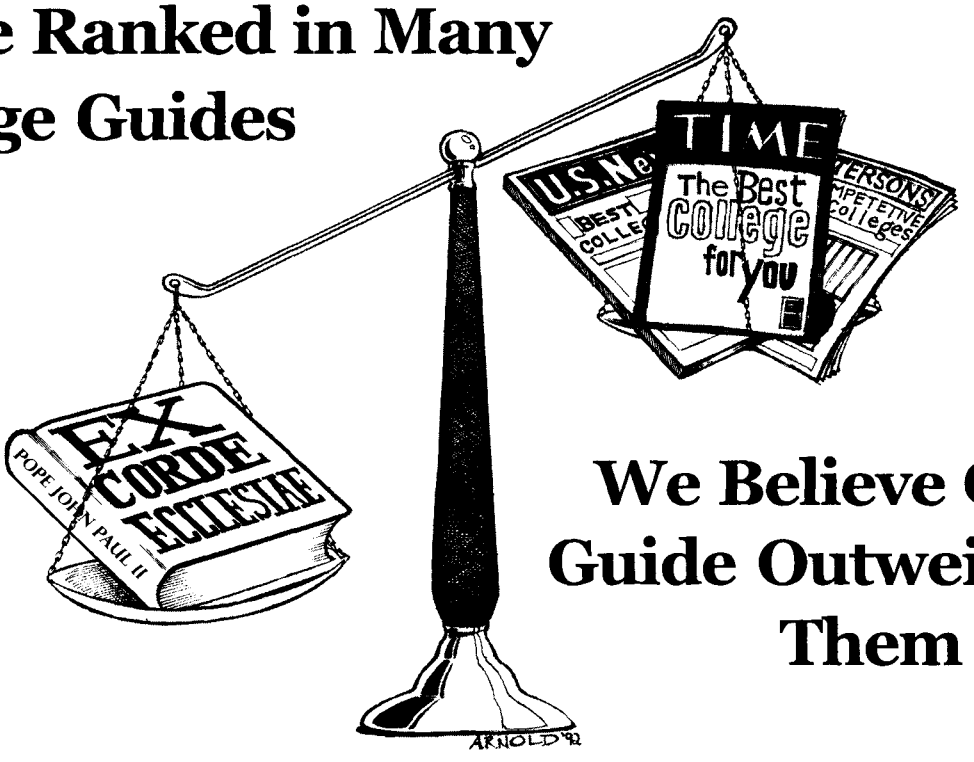

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ful exploration of the place of this wonderful human faculty in married life and in the institution of marriage would have been quite appropriate.

I do not think the editors of this volume are prudish, but in their earnest efforts to emphasize the social, theological, and historical aspects of the cultural institution of marriage they have needlessly downplayed the aspect of marriage that has the greatest power to nourish or destroy it. Reflections of thoughtful and knowledgeable experts in this field would have been as welcome as they are in the other areas that the book addresses.

THE CONCLUDING CHAPTER—"Will We Grow Old Together?"—comes closest to illustrating the strength of the sexual bond in marriage. Erik Erikson, in a fascinating and moving section from his study "The Voices of our Informants," quotes from interviews with elderly people about their experiences with marriage, divorce, losing a loved one, and remarriage. One widow recalls "earlier sensuality [that] seems to serve as a source of happiness as it brings to life intimate experience that has been missed for many years." Other people mention as particularly significant "the intimacy that has dominated their adult lives," or the "spontaneous, affectionate physical contact that is so much a part of old loving." This whole section, which deals with illness and the death of spouses, with forced separation and widowhood, is a reflection on the indelible bond between long-married people, the permanent imprint of one person on another.

In the voices of people speaking to interviewers, as well as in the greatest works of imaginative literature, we hear the joy and pain of people who have experienced the inescapably intimate bond of marriage—a bond that engages people in the most private, vulnerable aspects of their being. This is true whether the marriage is good or bad, an arranged marriage or the impulsive act of a couple of sex-crazed teenagers. Marriage constantly exposes one's self to that of another. The best selections in this excellent volume make us aware of this most remarkable aspect of a truly essential and irreplaceable human institution.

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Comprehending the Triune Mystery

THE TRINITY IN GERMAN THOUGHT. By SAMUEL M. POWELL. *Cambridge University Press. 280 pp. $59.95.*

***Reviewed by* David Vincent Meconi**

IN WRITING both of his Catechisms of 1529, Martin Luther attempted to highlight the trinitarian structure of Christianity by reducing the Roman twelve-article catechesis to a more explicit three-article one. It simply stated belief in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, with assent to the "holy Christian Church, the community of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and an everlasting life" treated collectively under the working of the Holy Spirit. However, as Samuel Powell shows in *The Trinity in German Thought*, Protestant theology on the Trinity since Luther's time has hardly been as clear.

Trinitarian thought has traditionally been built upon three main pillars: Christian revelation of how God is in Himself, an attendant theology of each divine person's unique interaction with creation, and the notion of personhood itself. Powell accordingly and astutely focuses his history of trinitarian theology *im deutschen Sprachraum* on the ideas of Word, history, and self. As he writes, "It was in Germany that an alternative to the medieval Roman Catholic view of revelation was born, in Germany that modern historical consciousness arose, and in Germany that the contemporary understanding of the self finds its roots." Beginning with Luther and Melanchthon, therefore, Powell proceeds chronologically to trace how Protestant theologians used these three concepts to eluci-

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date their various understandings of the Trinity.

Once Reformers had limited revelation to Scripture alone, they struggled to find a clear trinitarian theology within the Bible. Since Scripture never speaks explicitly of the Trinity, the thinking went, Christians should not presume to be able to say too much about it. Consider Martin Luther's claim that it is "iniquitous, not to say godless, for those who, trusting in their own powers, speculate concerning the supreme mystery of the Trinity," or Melanchthon's suggestion that "we would do better to worship the mysteries of the Divinity than to investigate them." In confining God's revelation to the written word, *sola scriptura* theology not only cut itself off from much of the rich trinitarian thinking since Nicaea, but limited revelation to the exigencies of human salvation.

Because Scripture depicts Christ coming not to deliver learned treatises on the hidden life of God but to open the gates of heaven to those who believe, catechetical utility quickly replaced dogmatic speculation. According to Powell, this position is best represented by Nicolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760), who, "in good Protestant fashion, swore abstinence from all forms of metaphysics, natural theology, and the contamination of theology by philosophy." In stressing one's own experience of redemption, Zinzendorf instrumentalized the faith by disconnecting God as He is in Himself, a concern too esoteric to be of practical consequence, from Christ the Savior upon whom our redemption rests. This search for the assurance of personal salvation could not help but result in an anti-intellectualism, dismissive of the more abstract matters of Christian doctrine. One thinks here of Goethe's lament: "[I was told that] I must believe that three are one and one is three. But this was repugnant to my mind's sense of truth and *I did not see how it was going to help me in the least.*" Or consider Immanuel Kant's cavalier declaration in *The Conflict of Faculties* that "whether we are to worship three or ten persons in the Deity makes no difference."

To the pietistic theology of Zinzendorf and the numerous liberal theologians he influenced—Albrecht Ritschl (1822-1889), Wilhelm Hermann (1846-1922), Adolf von Harnack (1851-1930)—what ultimately mattered was the salvation offered through the Christ of the Gospels.

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Further, this Christomonism led to the abandonment of dogma altogether. It came to be thought that Christian truths, like Christ himself, do not exist apart from the vicissitudes and effects of the Zeitgeist but belong to and are thus necessarily conditioned by certain historical changes. This new historical consciousness, with its emphasis on Christ's saving actions over against his nature and person, as well as the related "myths" of abstract dogma, was kept alive in the twentieth century by Rudolf Bultmann (1884-1976). Bultmann called into question not only what could be said about the Trinity, but developed an entire system in which history's effects on doctrine must be overcome so that the Christian message might be meaningful for the concrete individual of the historical present.

This question of God's relationship to history, already evident in the writings of such thinkers as Hermann Reimarus (1694-1768) and Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834), is most highly developed in the thought of G. W. F. Hegel (1770-1831). For Hegel, the Trinity is nothing other than God's self-explication in history. Unlike many contemporary thinkers who have rebelled against the Hegelian legacy, Hegel himself stressed God's dependence on the created order as the divine "developed" according to the concepts of universality (God as eternal idea), particularity (God's sensible appearance in creation, culminating in the person of Christ), and individuality (the Holy Spirit's reconciling creation with God).

Viewing God as reliant upon creation certainly marked a departure from traditional trinitarian thinking. It was nonetheless the logical conclusion of stressing time and experience over eternal creed, which Powell calls "the setting of the stage" for twentieth century thought. In fact, Powell suggests, most contemporary thinkers have dethroned Luther's distinction between the *Deus absconditus* and the *Deus revelatus* (God hidden and revealed) by stressing how God's redemptive acts in history reveal nothing new about God's intra-divine life, but act to confirm what is eternally true. Take, for example, Jürgen Moltmann's (b. 1926) view of creation as the expression of "God's self-communicative love" or Wolfhart Pannenberg's (b. 1928) rich treatment of the Paschal events confirming for us the eternal truth that Jesus is the obedient Son, the Father is the Ruler of all, and the Spirit is active always and everywhere, including in death. Moreover, there is Karl Barth's (1886-1968)

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emphasis on how God's "historical dealings with humanity," far from showing how God needs creation, actually reveal the perfect, self-reliant life of the Trinity itself.

This understanding—that creation can disclose the trinitarian relations of God—is how most of the medieval tradition, reaching back to St. Augustine's *De Trinitate*, proceeded. That is, the human mind's knowledge and love was thought to mirror the "Word" and "Love" of the Father. Although Powell quite accurately notes that "Protestants were distinctively cool to this method of expounding the doctrine of the Trinity," such philosophers as G. W. Leibniz (1646-1716) (with his description of the Trinity as force, intellect, and will) and Gotthold Lessing (1729-1781) (who defined the Trinity as an eternal act of self-knowledge) did go this route. Thanks to Hegel's emphasis on relation, however, this personalist approach to the Trinity enjoyed a brief twentieth-century revival in the idealism of Paul Tillich (1886-1965) as well as in Barth's very different notion of reflective selfhood. Powell accordingly takes his reader through varying accounts of the Trinity in Barth's *Church Dogmatics*, where Barth finally settles on a view that stresses God's inherent otherness: "God exists as the in-between of the Father and the Son; here God enters into and becomes that which is radically opposite God. Here otherness and difference are eternal aspects of the divine being, yet without disrupting God's identity."

While Powell's study is an extremely helpful one, it unfortunately suffers from some important gaps. How, for example, can one hope to understand the history of German theology without some discussion of the challenges posed by the likes of Ludwig Feuerbach, Auguste Comte, Karl Marx, or Friedrich Nietzsche? Similarly, how can Protestant thought be discussed in almost complete isolation from Catholic ideas? Although he never justifies this move, it is obvious from the start that Powell simply dismisses any German Catholic approaches to the Trinity, leaving the reader wondering how his work might have been improved by including the recent contributions of, say, Schmaus, Rahner, von Balthasar, or Greshake. Finally, the absence of doxology—the Church's liturgical praise and worship of the Father, Son, and Spirit—has always plagued Reform theology, especially in its more liberal currents. Yet Powell nowhere mentions it. One volume can only do so much, of course, and Powell's summaries of complicated theological doctrines are for the most part clear and accurate. Despite these significant omissions, then, Powell's work proves to be a reliable guide to Protestant theology's various approaches to comprehending the Triune God.

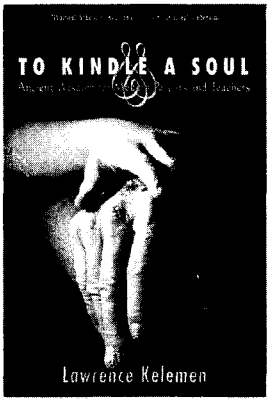
The Politics of Music

All Shook Up: Music, Passion, and Politics. By Carson Holloway. *Spence. 224 pp. $27.95.*

***Reviewed by* Michael Linton**

Are there prizes for titles and dust jackets? If so, Spence Publishing should win them both for *All Shook Up*. I don't know when I've seen a philosophy book covered by a more colorful dust jacket or graced with a snappier title. Carson Holloway is a political scientist teaching at Concord College in West Virginia, and the jazzy cover and hip title are appropriate for his highly readable plea for cultural reform through proper music education.

Michael Linton *is head of the Division of Music Theory and Composition at Middle Tennessee State University.*



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Believing that music has a natural power "to move the soul," Holloway argues that it can either "aid or impede not only our quest for a decent social order but also our striving for the goods in which we find our fullest happiness." This is accomplished by the ability of certain music to inculcate a predilection for rational thought and moral behavior. Since a free society requires citizens able to exercise self-control through reason, education in and cultivation of such music is necessary to a free society's health. With it a society thrives. Without it a society disintegrates.

This is an ancient belief, and after an initial chapter of contemporary cultural diagnosis, Holloway turns to Plato and Aristotle for the foundations of his argument. Thinking that early training in appropriate music can habituate a youth to a life of moderation and virtue, Plato argues that music should be a fundamental part of a boy's education. After a chapter on Aristotle's views on music, Holloway turns to shorter discussions of the views of Hobbes, Locke, and Montesquieu. He gives full chapters to Rousseau's and Nietzsche's thoughts on music and closes by returning to the present situation, focusing on the debate over the impact of popular music on the lives of American youth. Although here his primary analysis concerns arguments made by Allan Bloom in *The Closing of the American Mind* and by Robert Pattison in *The Triumph of Vulgarity*, for several pages Holloway also takes me to task for arguments I have made in this journal about the nature of music.

I'm flattered that Holloway noticed, and he both quotes me accurately and presents my position fairly. In writing about the supposed "Mozart effect" (FT, March 1999), I argued that music does not have the power to shape character or influence the will, and that Plato was wrong when he claimed that training boys in a particular kind of music would make them adopt certain patterns of behavior and particular dispositions. Holloway suggests that I misunderstand Plato and set up straw arguments against him, while also misrepresenting music's character.

Holloway may have a point. I may misunderstand Plato. Since I've changed my mind several times on elements of Plato's thought, I can't say that I won't change it again. But our primary disagreement isn't over Plato (although I will return to him later). Rather, it is over the fundamental premise of Holloway's book.

Does music indeed have a *natural* power to move the soul? We need to be clear about what we mean when

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we speak of a "natural power." If I take a match, light it, and hold my palm over the flame, I will be burned. It doesn't make any difference what mood I'm in at the moment, whether I happen to be of European or Asian descent, if I like or dislike matches, or if I want to be burned or not. If I hold someone else's palm to the flame, he, too, will be burned. And if there were some horrible tragedy in which many of us became trapped in a burning building, all of us exposed to the fire would be burned as well.

We can say that fire has the natural power to burn. And we can say that oil has the natural power to float on water and that streptococcus has the natural power to make us ill. To say that music, too, has a "natural power" is to argue that music has in itself the power to affect listeners in a way similar to fire's power to burn, or oil's power to float, or a bacteria's power to sicken. It has to affect things with the same kind of inevitability; it has to affect people in predictable ways regardless of particular circumstances.

But music simply isn't like that. One listener might experience the opening E-minor chorus of the *St. Matthew Passion* as conveying deep grief. A second might be simply bored. And a third—to whom the conventions of eighteenth-century European art music are foreign—might find the piece incomprehensible. If this music possessed a "natural power," it would have the same effect upon all listeners. It would move all listeners in the same way that a match scorches all palms. But that doesn't happen.

Let us consider a few areas of recent research. Gilbert Rouget is one of France's leading ethnomusicologists and has studied the role of music in religious trance. Despite the views of many practitioners who believe that the music itself produces ecstatic trance states, Rouget concludes that the trance is induced only when the communicant has made a prior decision to enter into a trance. After that decision is made, music is used, along with a constellation of other devices, to support the altered state and socialize it within the particular community. The conclusion of Rouget's research and analysis is that music itself has no power to affect behavior.

To cite another example, psychologists have long been curious about the possible relationship between heavy metal music and juvenile delinquency. Speculating that listening to such music contributed to delinquency, the American Medical Association in 1989 published an advisory to

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physicians suggesting that they question their adolescent patients' music preferences as an early sign of possible social dysfunction. Yet a 1993 study showed that while youth who preferred heavy metal music reported significantly more delinquency than youth with other musical tastes, there was no clear evidence that a preference for heavy metal music by itself significantly contributed to that delinquency. Instead, the researchers found that youth who were already prone to hypersexuality and manipulative and amoral behavior, and who had low parental supervision, found heavy metal music congenial to their psychological condition. The music did not have the power to affect the youth's behavior, but it did give youth a vehicle for self-expression.

Holloway is not unaware of issues like these. Yet his treatment of the "power of music" demonstrates insufficient concern for the complexity and nuance the subject requires. For instance, he gives Rousseau's reflections far too much credence (most modern musicians agree with Jean-Philippe Rameau, Rousseau's contemporary, that he was a combination of talented tunesmith, musical ignoramus, and outright fraud). Moreover, some of the recent studies to which Holloway refers in support of his thesis are cited incompletely (such as Rouget's work) and others are dealt with too uncritically.

All in all, the best recent research simply does not support the notion that music has a "natural" power to affect human behavior. Listening to a particular kind of music does not throw all its hearers into a trance any more than heavy metal music transforms its listeners into sociopaths. Likewise, there is no evidence that training in a particular kind of music will produce a person of predictable qualities and capacities. (Interestingly, there is one area of life in which music apparently has the ability to affect some people's behavior: grocery shopping. Several studies have found that faster paced music tends to make American shoppers walk down the aisles more quickly than slower paced music. But even in this case, the effect is not universal.)

Which brings us back to Plato. It is useful to remember that Plato was writing about music against a background of stylistic change. Sometime in the decades before his birth, music in Athens apparently went through a transformation somewhat similar to what happened in Italy at the turn of the seventeenth century. The music of an older generation was challenged by that of a newer generation, with the former generation calling the latter's music vulgar, vacuous, and theatrical, while the latter described the older music as outdated, unimaginative, and dull. Pherecrates, writing in the fifth century B.C., made this conflict the subject of a play. His *Chiron*, which has survived only in fragments, consists of a contest between the two musics, the old and the new, the classical and the modern, the noble and refined and the vulgar and complex. When Plato writes about "simple" music nurturing a lasting love for order, his comments must be understood as those of a social conservative who thinks of the music of the past as a permanent repertory, responds to the innovative art of his own age as incomprehensible, and lashes out at the new art as socially destructive. He wants the older, "noble" music. He forbids the chromatic Lydian mode. Arising as it did from oriental influences across the Aegean, it was seen by Plato as soft and lazy (a typically Greek prejudice toward the Persians). Much more suitable for education in his view is the native-born Dorian mode, manly and brave. Against this background, it makes sense to think of Plato—in his musical tastes at least—as a nativist reactionary.

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PLATO APPARENTLY believed that a return to the older kind of music would be instrumental in reinstating the ancient virtues. And I suspect that Holloway thinks so as well. But while Plato was fairly specific in the kind of music he believed would accomplish his goal (the Dorian and both species of the Phrygian), Holloway is less precise. Having devoted an entire book to the notion that our society can be transformed by the cultivation of the "right kind of music," Holloway is strangely mute regarding just what that music might be.

This is unfortunate. For Holloway's thesis to be taken seriously it needs to move beyond a review of past opinions about music and society to a prescription of precisely what music (which keys, rhythms, meters, forms, tunings, ensembles—even pieces and performances) will assist in society's redemption. Mozart's music, perhaps? But which Mozart? The Mozart of *Cosi fan tutte* or of *La clemenze di Tito*? Or should it be Gregorian chant? But if so, should it be the elaborate chant of Cluny or the purged repertory of the Cistercians? Should we listen to the cantatas of von Webern or the twelve-tone works of Stravinsky? Or maybe the hyper-individualistic works of Cage? Or simply Amy Grant's latest CD? Which music shall we choose?

I think Holloway doesn't say because he can't. And he can't because there simply isn't such a repertory. There is no piece of music that will itself cause any person to choose virtue over vice if that person does not begin by wanting to be virtuous, just as there is no repertory that will dispose children to hunger and thirst for righteousness. Holloway is an engaging and thoughtful writer. But his argument for the social and moral importance of music is but one more performance of an ancient fashion show for an emperor with no clothes.

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THE INFLUENCE OF FAITH: RELIGIOUS GROUPS AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY. Edited by ELLIOTT ABRAMS. *Rowman & Littlefield. 237 pp. $75.00 cloth, $24.95 paper.*

A product of the estimable Ethics and Public Policy Center, this timely collection of essays surveys the increasingly complex interaction of religion and foreign policy. An awareness of what has been termed the "desecularization of the world"—not simply the persistence of religion but its rising importance—forms the point of departure for this examination. More immediately, its essential backdrop is the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 and the heightened awareness of worldwide religious persecution, particularly of Christians, that spurred the passage of that legislation. What are we to make of this codification of religious liberty as an official U.S. foreign policy objective? The contributors who reflect on this question include such luminaries as Leo Ribuffo, J. Bryan Hehir, Samuel P. Huntington, and Charles Horner. Among the chief findings are these: that religion alone is unlikely to determine U.S. policy on any particular issue; that the impact of religion tends to be diffuse rather than focused, with many, often highly contradictory voices weighing in on multiple concerns; that a religious perspective does not necessarily guarantee wise policy outcomes; and that injecting religious concerns into foreign policy debates may improve them by making it impossible for policymakers to exclude moral and ethi-

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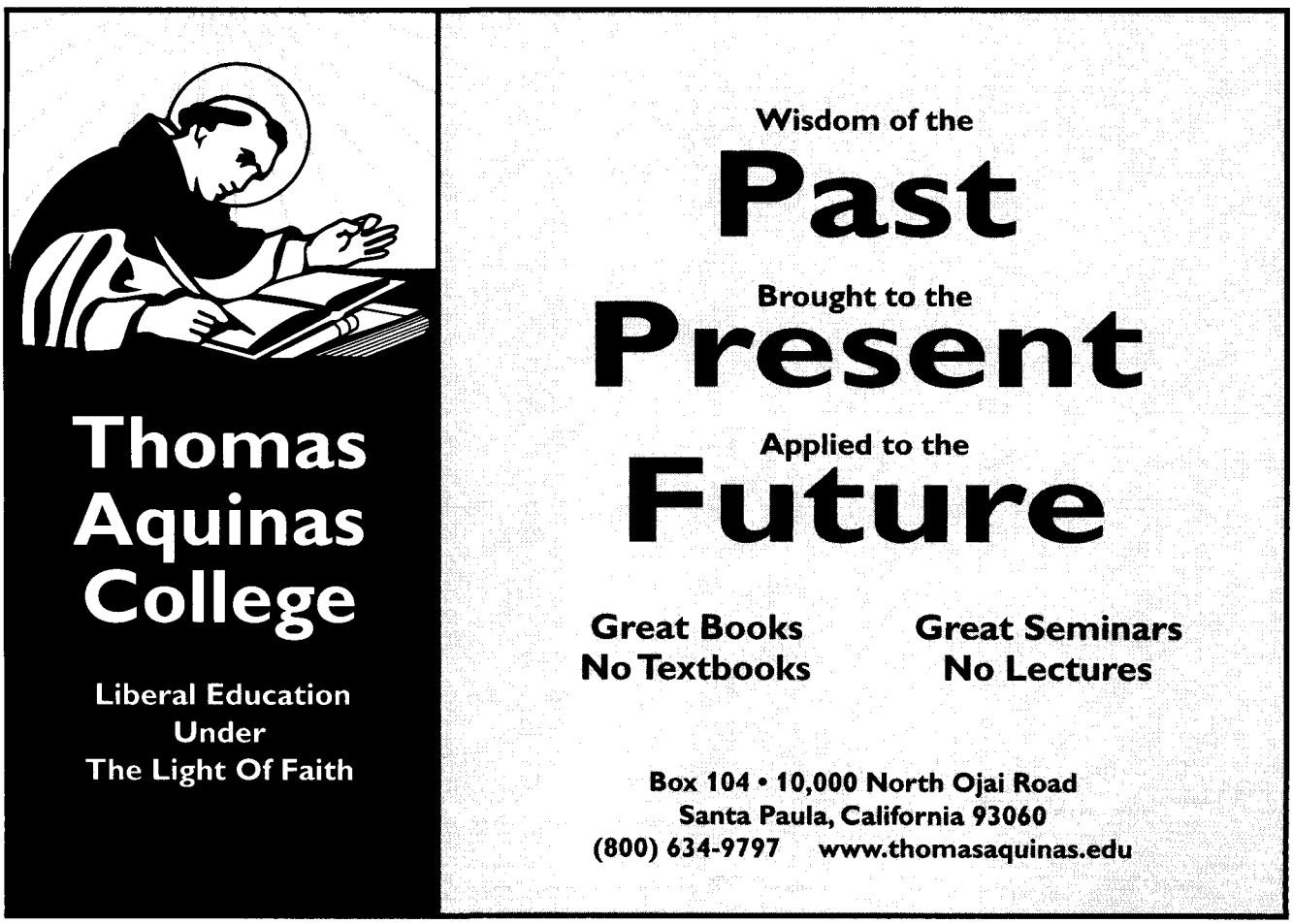
cal considerations from their deliberations. Altogether, an informative and insightful contribution that deserves wide attention.

— *Andrew J. Bacevich*

Simone Weil. By Francine du Plessix Gray. *Viking. 246 pp. $19.95.*

Simone Weil, the French philosopher and mystic who died (some would say destroyed herself) at age thirty-four, is a cultivated taste. Many recoil at her endless self-absorption, combined with a messianic conviction that she was, by sharing in the sufferings of the world, instrumental to its redemption. What is one to think of a person who said, "When I think of the Crucifixion, I commit the sin of envy"? For innumerable others, however, Simone Weil is one of the great souls of the twentieth century, her life a point of piercing and painful spiritual luminosity in a time of deep darkness. More than a half century after her death in 1943, her books—*Gravity and Grace, The Need for Roots, Waiting for God,* and several anthologies—are still widely read, and friendships are formed or deepened by the discovery of a shared appreciation of her thought. Francine Gray's gracefully written biography is in the series of *Penguin Lives,* and serves as a generally reliable introduction to Weil's life and work. Ms. Gray does not resist sufficiently the temptation to psychologize, especially with respect to Weil's anorexia and deep ambivalence about her Jewishness. After a discussion of the complexities that went into her "pathological need to share the sufferings of others," Ms. Gray announces, ironically one supposes, "It's as simple as that." Nothing about Simone Weil is simple, except her devotion to truth so relentless that it obscured more obvious truths. That relentlessness accounts for her holding back from becoming a Catholic, as she knew she should, because the Church-as-it-is did not meet her standard for truth-telling. While *Simone Weil* gives evidence of considerable research, it is odd that closer to home Ms. Gray gets so many little things wrong. For instance, Dietrich von Hildebrand was not a priest, and Corpus Christi on Morningside Heights is not Franciscan. Weil is the subject of much hagiography, and Gray is to be commended for maintaining a critical distance. But that critical distance too often becomes a pose of superiority. Simone Weil looks into the abyss, and Ms. Gray looks at her looking into the abyss but does not look where she



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is looking. Ms. Gray obviously wants to be sympathetic, but at crucial points she cannot repress her impatience, saying, in effect, that Weil should have gotten a life. It is an impatience, and even repugnance, shared by many others, but an appreciation of the intellectual and spiritual genius of Simone Weil is to be found on the far side of the initial recoil, and Ms. Gray never quite gets there. To envy Christ on the cross, she says, is "dreadful," meaning pathological. A more insightful writer, one who joined Weil in looking where she was looking rather than merely looking at her looking, might recognize in such envy an intimation of the human capacity for complete self-abandonment to love. All that having been said, Francine du Plessix Gray's *Simone Weil* is, for a general readership with a limited tolerance for the extremes by which Weil was possessed, a welcome introduction.

AMERICA'S BISHOP: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF FULTON J. SHEEN. By THOMAS C. REEVES. *Encounter. 280 pp. $25.95.*

Unlikely as it seems, this is the first full-scale biography of one of the most prominent public figures in America's last half century. At the beginning of television, Bishop Fulton J. Sheen's *Life Is Worth Living* was more popular than any program on the air. As Reeves, who has done prodigious research for this book, points out, Sheen is usually given no more than a line or two in books on the Catholic experience in America, and is totally ignored in general histories. In some accounts, he is mentioned in passing as the Catholic counterpart to Norman Vincent Peale and the "power of positive thinking" rage of the 1950s. Reeves, who has written extensively on American culture and politics, persuasively argues that this reflects a grave underestimation of the man and misunderstanding of the times. Sheen was not only a media star and masterful communicator, but an extraordinarily complex man whose flaws and strengths were intricately engaged with the dynamics of both Catholic leadership and popular culture. Today he is chiefly celebrated by Catholic conservatives for what they view as his defense of pre-conciliar Catholicism, but he was in fact an ardent champion of Vatican Council II, and in his brief, erratic, and finally sad time as Archbishop of Rochester, New York, tried to implement policies usually associated with liberalism. Combining the storyteller's art with the critic's eye, Reeves has produced a book that makes for a compelling read and should be of interest to anyone trying to sort out the maddening crosscurrents of Bishop Sheen's time and ours.

SPAIN BETRAYED: THE SOVIET UNION IN THE SPANISH CIVIL WAR. Edited by RONALD RADOSH ET AL. *Yale University Press. 524 pp. $35.*

Part of the invaluable "Annals of Communism" project being published by Yale. Documents from newly opened Soviet archives, presented here verbatim along with helpful commentary, demonstrate beyond reasonable doubt that from the beginning in 1936 through the end in 1939 Soviet support for the Spanish Republic was aimed at creating a puppet regime and establishing a Soviet-controlled "people's democracy" along the lines that became familiar after World War II. It is also evident that the Soviet Union aimed at bankrupting the Republican government by providing "military aid" at wildly inflated prices. Reports and other documents to and from Moscow are obsessed with factionalist disputes among those variously labeled as Trotskyists, anarcho-syndicalists, good and bad anarchists, right and left socialists, and other ideological sects all putatively allied against "the Fascists." Although

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leftist atrocities against the Church, including the execution of thousands of nuns and priests, were widespread, they are nowhere mentioned in these documents. Culture, religion, and the condition of the people are conspicuous by their absence. The only concerns are ideological disputes and military fortunes. *Spain Betrayed* is a chilling read.

The Opium of the Intellectuals. By Raymond Aron. *Transaction. 358 pp. $29.95 paper.*

Hard as it may be to believe, it took tremendous courage for an intellectual in postwar Paris not to be a Stalinist. And Raymond Aron was among the most courageous of French intellectuals. Thanks to Transaction Publishers, Aron's 1955 masterpiece is again in print. Reversing Marx's famous swipe at religion—that it is the "opiate of the masses"—Aron examines the myriad ways in which ideals of justice and equality were transformed by such writers as Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty into "secular religions" that legitimated monstrous acts of evil. Although Aron's Cold War focus and his preoccupation with half-forgotten French thinkers somewhat dates the book, his insights into the pathologies of ideological thinking—not to mention his defense of sober political judgment—make it necessary reading for anyone seeking to acquire a genuine political education. The new edition includes a powerful essay—"Fanaticism, Prudence, and Faith"—that Aron wrote to defend the book against its critics, as well as a brief but potent introduction by Harvard's Harvey Mansfield.

A Visit to Vanity Fair: Moral Essays on the Present Age. By Alan Jacobs. *Brazos. 176 pp. $18.99 paper.*

Without pretension, Alan Jacobs intends these "moral essays" to be in the tradition of Samuel Johnson and, in our own times, of Orwell and C. S. Lewis. Without exaggeration, one can say that they are worthy of that honorable company. Several of the fifteen essays have appeared in these pages; all are deserving of collection in a volume that is, in the words of Gilbert Meilaender (another moral essayist of note), "wise, witty, and winsome" and sure to provoke fresh thought about how we live today. The genius of Jacobs is to take some little and everyday thing, or perhaps a neglected literary text, and to unfold it into wisdom. His elegant style and vibrant faith combine in displaying truths that, once seen, you knew you knew all along, if only you had known. But readers of Alan Jacobs already know that. Warmly recommended.

Choosing the Right College: The Whole Truth about America's Top Schools. Revised and Expanded Edition. Researched and written by the staff of the Intercollegiate Studies Institute (ISI). *Eerdmans. 796 pp. $25 paper.*

It is an odd fact that, while America's top universities are the envy of the world (mostly because of the scientific research they produce), many of them have become places of profound moral and intellectual decay. Anyone who has spent time on a university campus in recent years knows that dorm room drug abuse and debauchery are as common as classroom demagoguery. Not that you'd hear about it from the numerous "college guides" published every year, which more often than not gloss over the manifest problems of higher education today. When it was first published in 1998, *Choosing the Right College* marked an important break from this conspiracy of silence. In a series of candid and crisply written essays, the book informed parents and young people about the academic, political, and social environment that prevails on dozens of campuses. Now this indispensable resource has been updated and expanded. It is an essential purchase for anyone seeking to make an informed choice concerning a college education.

Reason, Revelation, and Human Affairs: Selected Writings of James V. Schall. Edited by Marc D. Guerra. *Lexington. 192 pp. $60.*

"James V. Schall, S.J., is unquestionably the best, and . . . perhaps even the only, authentically Thomistic political scientist writing today." Thus writes Marc Guerra, editor of this useful collection of Schall's essays on such subjects as Plato, St. Augustine, St. Thomas, Lord Acton, Chesterton, Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin, Solzhenitsyn, and the relations between friend-

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ship, worship, and political philosophy, as well as between democracy and truth. If the essays included here do not fully support Guerra's evaluation, they do make for stimulating reading. This is political theory of a very high order.

The Founder of Opus Dei. By Andres Vazquez de Prada. *Scepter. 672 pp. $27.95 cloth, $19.95 paper.*

The first in a projected three-volume biography of Josemaria Escriva, the founder of Opus Dei who has been beatified by John Paul II. Beginning with his birth in January 1902, and going through the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War in January 1936, this volume provides exhaustive detail that will be chiefly of interest to those closely associated with "The Work." For an official biography, the book is remarkably candid about some of the personal and spiritual conflicts that marked the founder's early life. One hopes it will also be of interest to the many critics of Opus Dei who typically evidence scant acquaintance with the movement and the charism of its founder.

Truth and Hope. By Peter Geach. *University of Notre Dame Press. 120 pp. $24.*

Wise, learned, and a delight to read. That cannot be said of many collections of philosophical essays. "What Is Man?" "Truth, Love, and Immortality." "The Goodness of God." Geach cannot be accused of refusing to take on the big questions, but he does so with a light touch that is possible only for those who take themselves lightly, knowing a Good infinitely greater.

Liberty, Virtue, and Happiness: The Story of Economic Freedom in America. By Edward W. Ryan. *Nova Science Publishers. 296 pp. $34.*

For many years, Professor Ryan taught economics at Manhattanville College, and he was certainly not alone among professors of economics in deploring textbooks that failed to make the connections between economics, culture, and the virtues essential to a free and just society. Not content with deploring, he has written such a book himself, and it is well worth the attention of those who would better understand why economic freedom does not and cannot stand by itself.

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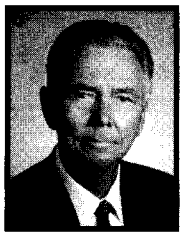

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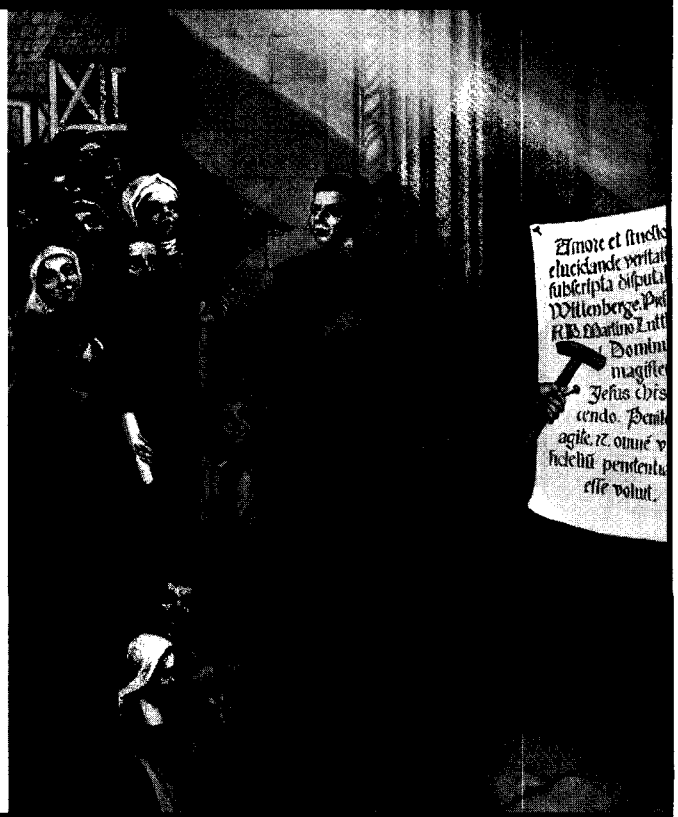

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Justice That Restores. By Charles Colson. *Tyndale. 175 pp. $17.99 paper.*

Two million Americans are in jail, and the building and managing of prisons has become very big business. Charles Colson, founder of Prison Fellowship, believes something has got to give, and proposes the alternative of "restorative justice." The idea is as old as the Quaker focus on penance that gave us the term "penitentiary," and indeed as old as the Bible. Colson contends that that is an argument in its favor, and proposes ways to update an old idea. What is the alternative? Three million?

After Prohibition: An Adult Approach to Drug Policies in the 21st Century. Edited by Timothy Lynch. *Cato. 193 pp. $9.95 paper.*

Former U.S. Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach says the War on Drugs "is this generation's Vietnam—with 'success' apparently being measured by a body count filling our prisons with nonviolent users." With a foreword by economist Milton Friedman, this book is as good a one-volume brief for decriminalizing drugs as one is likely to find. The arguments are, for the most part, persuasively stated, but will not likely convince those who doubt that letting loose yet another toxin into our culture will serve the common good.

I, Roger Williams: A Fragment of Autobiography. By Mary Lee Settle. *Norton. 311 pp. $24.95.*

The author has the founder of Rhode Island and great champion of religious freedom ruminating toward the end of his life in 1683 about what it all meant. The fictional "fragment of autobiography" is charming, especially in its use of the idioms of the time, and Williams' associations with such as Sir Edward Coke and John Milton provide ample grist for historical reconstruction. Anachronisms get in the way, however. Frequently the opinions expressed might be those of one of Williams' descendants today. Instead of Roger Williams' intense Christian conviction, we get a vaguely New Ageish belief in a "Father of Lights" whose chief commandment is tolerance and whose chief interest in religion is that it not be taken too seriously. At one point a proto-feminist Williams is even worrying that the use of "mankind" might be taken to exclude women. This, if you can believe it, in the seventeenth century.

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It is not history, and perhaps is not intended to be, but *I, Roger Williams* is a generally pleasant diversion.

PRIESTS FOR THE THIRD MILLENNIUM. By TIMOTHY M. DOLAN. *Our Sunday Visitor. 336 pp. $24.95.*

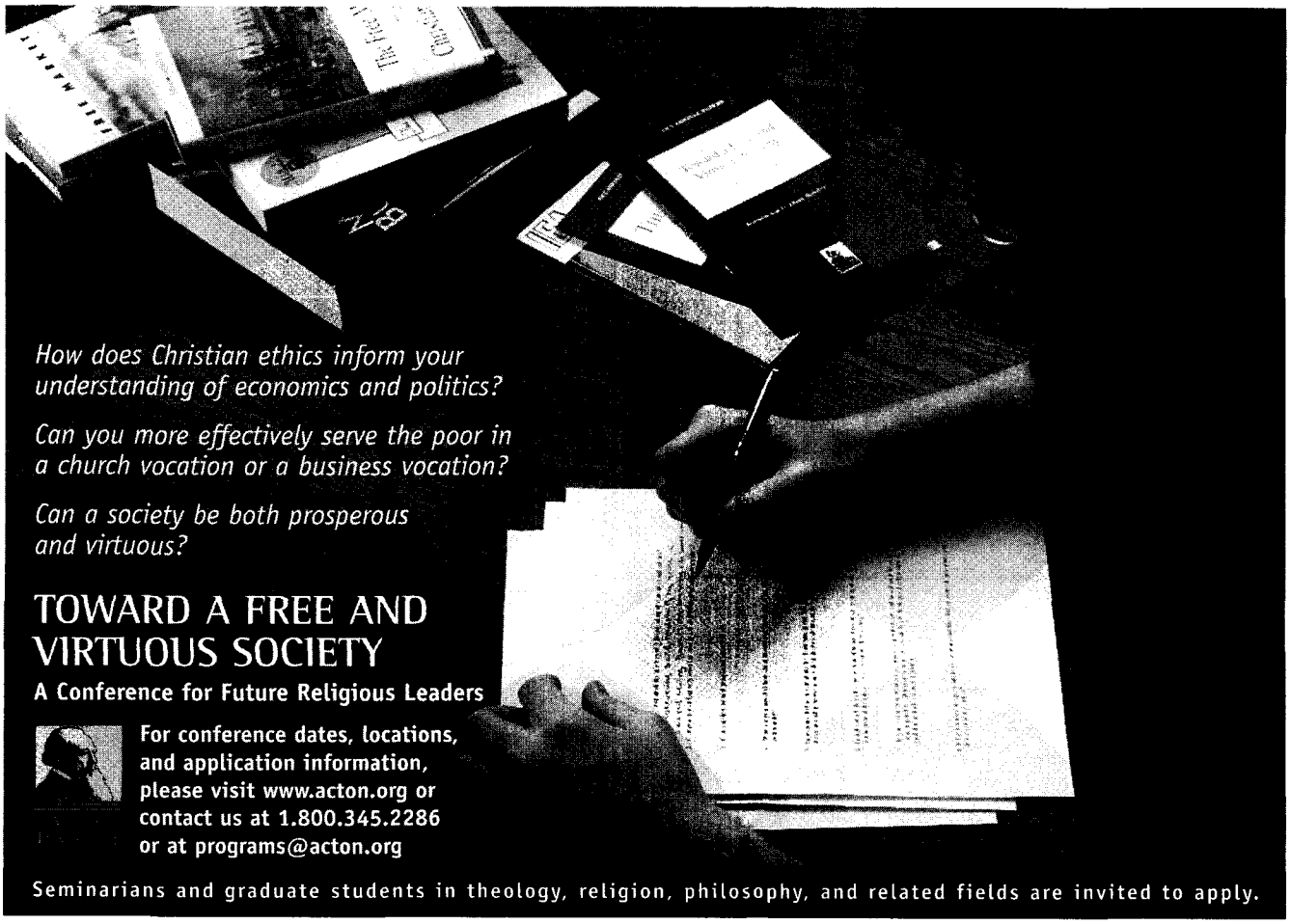
The author, recently ordained bishop, was for some years rector of the North American College in Rome, and for those who know him he exemplifies what it means to be the kind of priest described in this book of reflections—cheerful, devoted, theologically rooted, intellectually alive, and caught up in the adventure of serving Christ and his Church. *Priests for the Third Millennium* is tonic for the dispirited and spiritual wisdom for laity and priests alike.

THE PIVOT OF CIVILIZATION IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT. By MICHAEL W. PERRY. *Inkling. 279 pp. $19.95 paper.*

Margaret Sanger's *The Pivot of Civilization*, published in 1922, was a best-seller that did much to advance the eugenic argument against the coddling and breeding of the "unfit." The present book includes the Sanger text and surrounds it with commentary by many others, such as the editors of the *New York Times*, who shared the Rockefeller family's positive enthusiasm for improving "the human stock." Contrarian reviews are also included, such as G. K. Chesterton's "Eugenics and Other Evils." The book is put together somewhat eccentrically, with too many interventions by the editor to belabor the obvious, but in a time when the language and practice of eugenics is again becoming respectable, the materials in *The Pivot of Civilization in Historical Context* are newly pertinent.

KOSOVO: CONTENDING VOICES ON BALKAN INTERVENTIONS. Edited by WILLIAM JOSEPH BUCKLEY. *Eerdmans. 528 pp. $35.*

Yugoslavia. Serbia. Albania. Bosnia-Herzegovina. Kosovo. All but a very few Americans have not the foggiest about where these entities are or what the fighting was, and is, about. It began with a shambles and, if it ever ends, will end with a shambles. Yet some think the NATO intervention one of the necessary and world-defining actions since the fall of Soviet communism, while others, equally thoughtful, decry it as a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grave injustice compounded by confusion. Buckley, who teaches ethics at Georgetown, has done an admirable job of pulling together statements by world leaders, victims and perpetrators of horror on all sides, and writers who have thought long and hard about the morality of war. Regrettably, and even among the publicly attentive, Kosovo was a brief and ugly nightmare we are eager to forget, hoping that it will not explode again in tomorrow's headlines. This fine book helps us to remember, and to prepare for the Kosovos ahead.

Dangerous Diplomacy. By Theo Tschuy. *Eerdmans. 265 pp. $25.*

The inspiring story of Carl Lutz, the Swiss consul in Hungary who courageously engineered the rescue of an estimated sixty-two thousand Jews in Hungary during the Holocaust. Although among the first to be honored as a righteous gentile at Yad Vashem, he and what he did have been, until now, undeservedly neglected. Foreword by Simon Wiesenthal.

The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Punishment. By T. Richard Snyder. *Eerdmans. 159 pp. $18 paper.*

Nobody can deny that there are many problems with our criminal justice system, but we really are not helped by this screed against an allegedly racist and vengeful culture that, driven by misguided Protestant notions of human depravity, is obsessed with punishment and indifferent to the alternative of rehabilitating the wrongdoer by a process of "restorative justice." This book provides additional ammunition for those who accuse would-be reformers of the criminal justice system of indulging in uninformed moralism.

A Free Church, A Holy Nation: Abraham Kuyper's American Public Theology. By John Bolt. *Eerdmans. 502 pp. $30 paper.*

Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) was a Dutch theologian, journalist, and statesman who in some ways anticipated current developments such as "Evangelicals and Catholics Together." John Bolt of Calvin Theological Seminary, Grand Rapids, has for the first time brought the fullness of Kuyper's thought to bear on American public theology—meaning a theologically informed understanding of the American experiment. Bolt recognizes that evangelicals are today drawing heavily on Catholic social teaching, and contends that Kuyperian thought can make a distinctive contribution, both as corrective and complement, to ecumenical Christian thinking about public tasks. *A Free Church, A Holy Nation* leaves no doubt that he is right about that.

A Short Systematic Theology. By Paul M. Zahl. *Eerdmans. 108 pp. $12 paper.*

And he does mean short. The author, dean of the Cathedral Church of the Advent (Episcopal) in Birmingham, Alabama, was inspired by Theodore Beza (1519-1605) who said that the entirety of Christian theology could be reduced to one page. Zahl's is an exercise of more than passing interest, attempting to fit the whole counsel of God into twenty-five succinct theses. Of course nothing is treated thoroughly, never mind exhaustively, but in such short compass Zahl's relentlessly Christ-centered approach manages to include most of the basics, imaginatively laced with literary allusions, making this an attractive introduction to the historic Christian claims about reality and our part in all that is and ever will be.

Habits of the Mind: Intellectual Life as a Christian Calling. By James W. Sire. *Intervarsity. 262 pp. $14.99 paper.*

Written from an evangelical Protestant angle, this book is in one part a persuasive case for intellectual discipleship and, in another, a spirited polemic against Christian intellectuals or wannabe intellectuals who trim their thinking, at least in public, to conform to what is deemed respectable. Both parts of the argument should be taken seriously, and not just by evangelicals.

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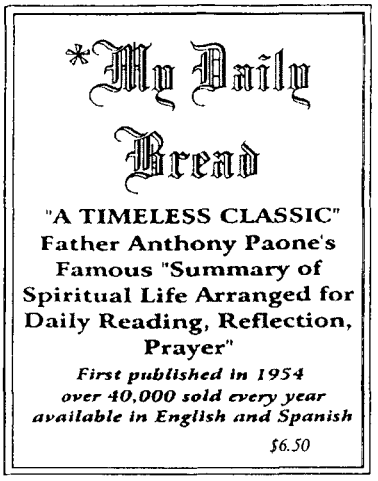

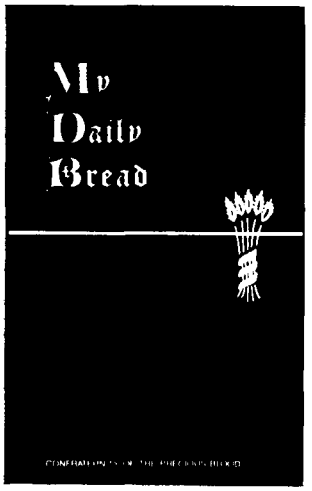

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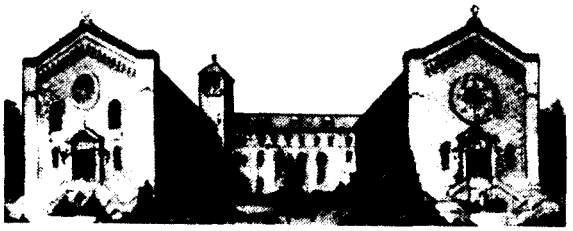

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THE PUBLIC SQUARE

A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

Richard John Neuhaus

One Nation Under Many Gods

The idea of "Christian America" meets with determined opposition on many fronts, and for many reasons. Few have pulled together the argumentative strands of opposition with such verve as Diana L. Eck of Harvard University. Her book, *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation* (HarperSanFrancisco, 404 pp., $27), should, in the view of some, permanently retire the idea of Christian America. As the publisher says, Prof. Eck is "an articulate and credentialed Harvard scholar," and her "findings strike at the heart of xenophobia in this country [and are] sure to startle many Americans." To say that Prof. Eck is well credentialed is an understatement. She is Professor of Comparative Religion at Harvard, Master of Lowell House (or, as she prefers, co-master), Director of the Pluralism Project, the recipient of major grants from the Ford Foundation, and in 1998 President Clinton bestowed upon her the National Humanities Medal. Her dustjacket photo, by Bachrach no less, reveals a woman both feisty and thoughtful, and the endorsements of the book by prestigious academics—Harvey Cox, Edwin Gaustad, Wade Clark Roof, Alan Wolfe—far exceed the fulsome praise customary among friends. *A New Religious America* intends to be, and is, a major statement.

Eck knows something of the history of the Christian America that she insists is now past, and she is not entirely unsympathetic to that history. She quotes Tocqueville's assessment of America in the 1830s: "There is no country in the world where the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in America, and there can be no greater proof of its utility and of its conformity to human nature than that its influence is powerfully felt over the most enlightened and free nation of the earth." In the American democracy, said Tocqueville, religion is "the first of political institutions," referring not only to its public influence but to the fact that it is the school in which people learn the habits and responsibilities of democratic association.

But there is no going back to that, says Eck. Plus, her sympathy for that earlier time is sharply qualified by the early American hostility to the religion of Native Americans. She complains that the American settlers thought they were bringing religion to the Indians, but they already had a religion that can lay claim to being more authentically American. One might respond that the settlers were well aware that the Indians had their religions; they thought they were bringing them the true religion. As we shall see, it is this notion of truth in connection with religion—or, more precisely, the rejection of that notion—that is at the heart of Prof. Eck's argument.

A Religious Settlement

A hundred and twenty years after Tocqueville, Will Herberg wrote about a tripartite American religious situation in his influential book *Protestant, Catholic, Jew.* After World War II, the liberal Protestant cultural hegemony began to collapse, and the more conservative Protestants—those who would later be called evangelicals—were isolated in the supposed backwaters of "fundamentalism." Formerly immigrant Catholics were being accepted as part of the mainstream, and a deal was struck with American Jews that, at least for public purposes, we would speak of our society as being based upon a Judeo-Christian moral tradition. This was the new religio-moral-cultural

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"settlement" celebrated by Herberg. (As a rabbi friend has remarked, "It was really astonishingly generous of you Christians to give our 2 percent of the population 50 percent of the say in defining the culture.")

But, according to Eck, Herberg's new settlement is now as untenable as Tocqueville's assessment more than a century earlier. "By the 1990s," she writes, "it was Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, and Sikh, and our collective consciousness of the wide and deep presence of America's Native peoples was greater than ever before." What was "one nation under God" is now "one nation under many gods," and we should not only get used to it; we must learn to celebrate the change. To help us understand and celebrate that change is the purpose of *A New Religious America.*

Diana Eck is nothing if not an enthusiast, and the exuberance with which she details the changed religious situation lends her account a certain charm. In Nashville she visits a Hindu temple, in the farmlands south of Minneapolis she is taken with the Southeast Asian roofline of a Cambodian Buddhist temple, while outside Toledo she notices the minarets of a mosque when driving by on the interstate. "Not all of us have seen the Toledo mosque or the Nashville temple, but we will see places like them, if we keep our eyes open, even in our own communities. They are the architectural signs of a new religious America."

Prof. Eck cannot hold back from waxing rhapsodic about "the symphony" of this new circumstance, "each retaining its difference, all sounding together, with an ear to the music of the whole." Or, better than the symphony image, "perhaps we need to stretch our imagination to something more akin to jazz. . . . Learning to hear the musical lines of our neighbors, their individual and magnificent interpretations of America's common covenants, is the test of cultural pluralism." She invites us to see "the religious landscape of America from sea to shining sea, in all its beautiful complexity." At times one almost envies Prof. Eck's ebullient sense of fresh discovery, reflected in page after page of effusive appreciation. Admittedly, some readers may find the uncritical enthusiasm cloying after a while—her every visit to an exotic site or participation in an arcane ritual is "moving," "deeply meaningful," "inspiring," etc.—but it cannot be denied that Eck has paid attention to generally neglected or unknown corners of American society, and that gives the book moments of real interest.

The Multicultural Reality

A New Religious America is a study in, and promotion of, multiculturalism. She writes, "We know that the term *multiculturalism* has crept into our vocabulary and that this term has created such a blaze of controversy that some people mistake it for a political platform rather than a social reality." Prof. Eck wants it understood that her interest is not in advancing a political platform but in helping us understand and celebrate the multiculturalism that is, in fact, the social reality of America. This is not to say that she approaches her subject without biases. Who does? While she does not disguise the fact that she is a more or less conventional liberal (some would say leftist) on the usual questions in public dispute, the acknowledged biases in her understanding of religion itself are most pertinent to the argument.

For Diana Eck, religion is mainly, and sometimes, it seems, exclusively, a matter of spiritual experience. Doctrine (apart from the teaching of unlimited tolerance) and moral rules (apart from prescribed stances on issues in cultural dispute) are sharply subordinated. She knows there are traditionalists who think religion is "delivered and passed intact from generation to generation," but they are simply wrong. "Our religious traditions are dynamic not static, changing not fixed, more like rivers than monuments," she writes. The diversity celebrated at places such as Harvard is a "revolution" that is transforming society. "Our campuses have become the laboratories of a new multicultural and multireligious America."

Eck is affiliated with the United Methodist Church and she quotes favorably a Native American executive of that body who protests the arrogance of its trying to displace indigenous religions with Christianity. "Throughout our history," Eck writes, "the United States has been dominated by the influence of Christianity—strongly monotheistic, with many Christian voices articulating an exclusivist view of 'the way, the truth, and the life.'" The freedom of religion enshrined in the Constitution, says Eck, "clashes directly with the negative religious views of pluralism held by some conservative Christians." Here, she writes, Hinduism also makes a unique contribution by teaching us "a theology of religious pluralism." In a new religious America there is no place for the definite article; we should understand the words of Jesus about himself as a claim to be *a* way, *a* truth, and *a* life. I am not sure that Eck really means to say that religion she calls "exclusive"—but that others would call inclusive because it is salvation offered to absolutely everyone—is unconstitutional. Unfortunately, she does not expand on what would appear to be a novel reading of the First Amendment.

It is in connection with the view of religion as dynamic, changing, and flowing that one may understand the author's reason for discussing her relationship with her partner, to whom the book is

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dedicated "heart and soul." The reader may think this a personal matter that is extraneous to the subject at hand, but the author uses it to illustrate the kind of liberation from tradition that she extols. Dorothy Austin is a professor of psychology and religion and an Episcopal minister who has, says Eck, "a genius for making friends." It was considered a major breakthrough at Harvard when a same-sex couple was appointed as co-masters of Lowell House. Eck writes of Ms. Austin, "She kicked off her shoes with me at many temples, mosques, and gurdwaras," and much of the book indeed reads as an account of friends having a jolly good time on a spiritual shopping spree, eagerly consuming one new experience after another. The jollity, however, should not be allowed to obscure the very big argument that Prof. Eck wants to make.

"Who We Are"

Eck's purpose, as she says many times over, is to explain "who we are" as a people—or at least who we would be if we overcame the "hatred and bigotry" that prevents us from being who we are. References to hatred and bigotry abound in the book, and sometime seem to include everyone who disagrees with the author, especially people who subscribe to what we may call definite article truth. On the other hand, hatred and bigotry are very bad things that cannot be condemned too often, so one is inclined to cut Prof. Eck some slack with respect to a style that might otherwise be criticized as grindingly repetitious and offputtingly strident. The patient reader will recognize the heart of the argument being made: when it comes to religious and cultural diversity, Americans can be put into three categories—those who favor *exclusion*, those who favor *assimilation*, and those who favor *pluralism*. According to Eck, Peter Brimelow, who argues in *Alien Nation* that the country needs to get control of its immigration policy, is obviously an exclusionist (see "hatred and bigotry" above). Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., who says in *The Disuniting of America* that multiculturalism, especially on campus, has accented the *pluribus* at the expense of the *unum*, is an assimilationist. And, of course, the author and others whose motto is, as she says, "the more *pluribus* the better" are the pluralists.

Prof. Eck is perhaps unduly optimistic about the number of Americans in her third category. Although she acknowledges that Harvard is not the "bellwether" of American society, she keeps returning to Harvard, and especially to the Harvard Divinity School where she teaches, as the exemplification of the "new religious America" that she favors. It seems that almost everyone at Harvard shares her understanding of pluralism. And not only at Harvard. She is delighted to discover a Buddhist group near Boston that leads an annual pilgrimage deploring the history of slavery in America, and Native Americans in the area who observe Thanksgiving Day as a National Day of Mourning. But one may respectfully ask whether these are instances not of pluralism but of "out-group" assimilation to the dominant culture, meaning the dominant culture of Harvard and environs. The reader cannot help but wish that Prof. Eck had explored such nuances. But then, the book is already very long, or at least seems very long, and it is perhaps understandable that the author did not want to let critical analysis get in the way of the celebration of diversity.

Dubious Recruiting

Some of Eck's efforts to recruit others to her understanding of pluralism, however, do seem to be a bit of a stretch. For instance, she quotes favorably Father John Courtney Murray on "the coexistence within the one political community of groups who hold divergent and incompatible views with regard to religious questions." In the very same *We Hold These Truths*, however, Murray writes: "The American Proposition rests on the more traditional conviction that there are truths; that they can be known; that they must be held; for, if they are not held, assented to, consented to, worked into the texture of institutions, there can be no hope of founding a true City." That, of course, is the precise argument that it is the entire purpose of *A New Religious America* to refute. Eck is correct in saying that Murray favored a "structure of dialogue" over a "structure of warfare," but his understanding of dialogue assumes the idea of definite article truth from which Eck says we must be liberated. Fr. Murray was quite insistent that the democratic pluralism he favored has a very particular religious and cultural history grounded in the Judeo-Christian tradition. Eck is in many ways admirably ecumenical, but she lets her irenic spirit get the best of her when she tries to recruit to her position figures such as John Courtney Murray who spent their careers advocating a position diametrically opposite to hers.

This irenic overreach is evident also in Prof. Eck's appropriation of the Williamsburg Charter. That document was signed by a wide array of religious leaders on the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, and was intended to propose a way in which Americans might continue to live together with "our deepest differences." Prof. Eck greatly admires the Williamsburg Charter, and I confess that I agree with her good judgment in this case. At the same time, I must declare a vested interest, since I was chairman of

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the committee that wrote the Williamsburg Charter. I regret to say that Prof. Eck gravely misunderstands the intention and text of the document. Here again, she would have been well advised to contain her irenic pattern of recruitment.

The argument of the Charter is that it is a false pluralism that pretends our deepest differences finally make no difference. The Charter sets forth "how we view the place of religion in American life and how we should contend with each other's deepest differences in the public sphere." The key word here is "contend." The proposal is that definite article truths in conflict can be engaged within the bond of civility in addressing controverted questions of public policy. The Charter also assumes the history-specific, Judeo-Christian development of the authentic pluralism that it espouses. In sum, and as with Fr. Murray, the Charter stands in starkest opposition to the argument of *A New Religious America*. I do not suggest that Prof. Eck is deliberately misrepresenting the Williamsburg Charter. Any document could be improved, and it is more than possible that, despite my efforts and those of many of the country's leading thinkers on these matters, the Charter is subject to the misunderstanding proposed by Prof. Eck. I do confess to being somewhat surprised, since I have never before come across such an inventive construal of what we wrote.

Truths in Conflict

The three-part distinction between exclusion, assimilation, and pluralism is hardly original with Prof. Eck, as she probably knows, and has no doubt been around so long because people have found it useful. At the hands of Prof. Eck, however, one must ask whether any of the three terms means what it is usually taken to mean. Pluralism, for instance, is much more than diversity. Religious and moral pluralism means that there exist in the same space plural ways of understanding reality and rules for living drawn from those ways of understanding. These ways are not only divergent but are frequently in conflict. The result is an ongoing contestation that, as proposed in the Williamsburg Charter, need not destroy but can actually strengthen the bond of civility. These different ways of faith and life come with different rituals, customs, and spiritual accents—all of which Prof. Eck amply appreciates—but they also come with, indeed they necessarily assume and assert, different truth claims. By excluding definite article truth claims—i.e., this is *the* truth—Eck effectively stifles the reality of pluralism. When no truth claims are "privileged," when all are radically relativized, all are effectively silenced, at least in public. Such a simplistic formulation of pluralism results in the death of pluralism.

That is one way of stating the difficulty with Prof. Eck's argument. One may take a slightly different tack, however, and suggest that, contrary to her repeatedly proclaimed intention, she is, no doubt inadvertently, advocating a course of exclusion and assimilation. In the orchestra or jazz stylizations of *A New Religious America*, it is made clear time and again that one very large group does not belong, at least not until its members change their ways. It is composed of the Christians who would convert others to their faith and even, as she complains, publicly privilege the Judeo-Christian tradition by, for instance, posting the Ten Commandments in public places. In a country in which more than two-thirds of the people claim to believe that Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life—and to have made a personal commitment to him as such—this is a very large exclusion. As for her advocating a course of assimilation, there is no mistaking her eagerness to assimilate the relatively small part of the population that professes a religion other than Christianity or Judaism to her understanding of all religions as "dynamic not static, changing not fixed, more like rivers than monuments."

This combination of exclusion and assimilation produces not pluralism but Harvard. And, of course, similarly elite campuses which are variously described as laboratories for the America that will be or as miniature representations of the America that is. Prof. Eck manifestly loves Harvard, as do many good people, but she seems to be undecided about whether it is because Harvard is not like America or because Harvard is like America. Most of the time, she settles on the resolution that Harvard is what America should be and, she fondly hopes, is becoming. Now Harvard is somewhat diverse in terms of the ethnic, national, and religious backgrounds of faculty and students, but, in terms of its dominant moral, intellectual, and political habits, is it pluralistic? If one insisted upon saying it is pluralistic, it is clearly a very particularist kind of pluralism. Harvard is not pluralistic in the way that, say, Brooklyn is pluralistic. Pluralism means different worlds. Harvard is one world of informal exclusions and assimilated particularisms. Brooklyn is many worlds.

In a Long Tradition

In her enthusiasm, which, as I say, is not without its charms, Prof. Eck and her friends have kicked off their shoes and sat in on sundry exotic rites. One gets the impression of an academic seminar on a nonstop field trip. The result is a book that reads like a

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Baedeker of the remote and offbeat, except that, as she keeps pointing out, these exotica are to be found right here in places such as Chicago, Phoenix, and Sacramento. "Look!" she is shouting to get our attention. "It is not 'them' and 'us.' This is who *we* are!" She cites Hillary Rodham Clinton on how we have become a global village. Also Mrs. Clinton on "what makes America great" when welcoming Muslims to the first-ever observance of Eid al-Fitr at the White House: "For two centuries we have prided ourselves on being a nation of pluralistic beliefs, united by a common faith in democracy."

Eck's assertions about "who we are," however, are frequently overwhelmed by her earnest longing for who we might be. In this respect her book is part of a long tradition that goes back to Emerson, Thoreau, and the nineteenth-century Transcendentalists. This is especially evident in her section on the "Easting" of New England. There the bulk of her treatment of Hinduism in America deals with esoteric groups such as the Vedanta Society that have long catered to a small American elite fascinated by the "wisdom of the East." As an aside, she notes that today, usually under the auspices of what is called New Age, "this turn of mind has gradually saturated the whole of American culture with essentially Hindu, more broadly Asian, ideas without speaking of them as such." There is much truth in that, but Eck does not develop the point, perhaps because that saturation is, in fact, an instance of Christian America assimilating, however incoherently, alternative traditions. She writes, with apparent regret, that Hinduism has not developed any kind of public presence in America, and that immigrants from India identify themselves not as Hindus but as Indian-Americans. Pretty much as earlier immigrants—Italian-Americans, Irish-Americans, et al.—did before them.

It is the "new" in *A New Religious America* that is unpersuasive. Prof. Eck's liberal exorcizing of definite article truth is in clear continuity with, and for the most part simply reiterates, the position of William Ernest Hocking, also of Harvard Divinity School, who was the driving force behind the 1932 report *Rethinking Missions* that, according to most historians, marked the end of oldline Protestantism's commitment to world missions. The argument that prevailed is that Christianity has no greater claim to truth than do other religions and therefore the effort to convert others is finally no more than an instance of cultural arrogance. Of course, world missions continue to flourish today, but the enterprise is almost entirely under evangelical Protestant and Catholic auspices, precisely the forces supposedly prone to the intolerance and exclusion that Prof. Eck deplores.

As recounted by Eck, the high point of the interreligious "pluralism" that she favors was the 1893 Parliament of World Religions in Chicago. Swami Vivekananda was the star of the gathering and he went on to found the Vedanta Society, which was the forerunner of other projects in the "Easting" of America. Eck discusses in detail and ascribes great importance to, for instance, the International Society of Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON or Hare Krishna), a group that has never had more than four thousand members in the U.S., and is chiefly attractive to young people from thoroughly secularized Jewish homes (see Rodney Stark, *One True God*, p. 111). The 1993 centenary observance of the Parliament, also in Chicago, was, Eck admits, a pale reflection of the first event, and was noted chiefly for its effort to draft a global charter of ethics under the leadership of the dissident Catholic theologian Hans Küng. She waxes enthusiastic about the colorfully diverse opening ceremonies in Chicago, observing in passing that, since it was held on the Sabbath, Jewish participation was limited. But Jews and Judaism do not figure prominently in the new pluralism celebrated by Prof. Eck. She is pleased to report that at the Chicago affair she was seated at a table with "Hans Küng himself."

The Muslim Difference

In Eck's Baedeker of a nation under many gods, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh, and Native American traditions are warmly affirmed, but even by her own telling it is finally only the Muslim presence that aspires to make a public difference in America. Whatever Buddhists, Hindus, and Sikhs may do religiously in their homes and temples, they do not want to "stick out" or to pose a challenge to Judeo-Christian America. Like earlier immigrants, they want to "fit in," while preserving their distinctive traditions in family and community observances. Multicultural tourists such as Prof. Eck may agitate for a nation under many gods, but there is little or no public advocacy by Buddhists, Hindus, or Sikhs for such a redefinition of American society. In addition, the very large number of Asian immigrants who are Christian goes unmentioned by Prof. Eck. For instance, Presbyterianism in New York City would be practically nonexistent without Koreans. Greater enthusiasts for the idea of Christian America are not to be found.

Prof. Eck is eager to recruit Native Americans to her multicultural cause. The sad reality is that for Native Americans—many of whom now want again to be called American Indians—the trail of tears continues as they languish on reservations in alcoholic stupor, frequently exploited by tribal gangsters bent upon exploiting the vices of the majority population with

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casinos and related semi-criminal enterprises. To be sure, there is also the observance of Native American "religious traditions"—now largely fabricated with the help of multicultural experts from liberal divinity schools—which in some Indian communities is a big draw in the tourist trade. But, apart from a few radical activists, most of whom had their fifteen minutes of celebrity in the 1960s, there is no Indian program for the religious or cultural redefinition of America. There is a great sadness here, but it is part of the continuing tragedy of the country's native population, for which the European settlers bear a large measure of moral responsibility. Over the course of more than three hundred years, however, nobody, including Native Americans, has come up with an answer that works. Many proposals have been tried, from total assimilation to nationalist separatism, and no doubt others will be tried in the future, but the reality is, for better or worse, that, in terms of posing a serious challenge to the reality of Judeo-Christian America, Native Americans are on a par with the Hare Krishnas.

The Muslim case is different. There are perhaps four million Muslims in America; nobody knows for sure. There are Muslim organizations claiming that there are ten million, while some social scientists put the figure as low as two million. Prof. Eck goes along with the convention of estimating about four million. Almost everyone agrees that at least half of these Muslims are American-born blacks. Eck gives her hunch that it is closer to 40 percent. The Black Muslim movement began in Detroit with Elijah Muhammad in the 1930s. Eck writes, "For orthodox Islam, the final messenger was and is Muhammad, and to speak of Elijah Muhammad as the messenger constituted a clear heresy." She then quotes approvingly the words of Louis Farrakhan to those who question whether he is really a Muslim: "I don't care if none of you believe I'm a Muslim. You are not my judge. Take off the robes of Allah. They don't fit you well!" And she very much approves Farrakhan's appointment of a woman to be imam of an Atlanta mosque. "This unprecedented move," she writes, "is yet another way in which Minister Farrakhan follows his own lights, not those of an imposed orthodoxy." The suggestion is that it is less important to be Muslim, as defined by a normative tradition, than to follow one's own lights. It is a very American or, if you will, Emersonian suggestion, but one wishes Prof. Eck had addressed the objection that this inevitably ends up not in pluralism but in the monism of people following their own lights. One recalls Harold Rosenberg's memorable phrase, "the herd of independent minds."

Also in connection with the Black Muslim movement, Eck offers a more sweeping generalization about black religion: "Orthodoxy, after all, has never been the measure of black religion in America. Experience has always won out over official doctrine." I do not think that Prof. Eck means to say that blacks are less intelligent or thoughtful about religion, only that they are less intellectual. And those who may find Eck's generalizations about blacks to be offensively condescending should keep in mind that, for her, the priority of experience over doctrine is a mark of religious vitality and progress. What some may take as a slur against blacks and their religious sensibilities is clearly intended as a compliment. Black Christianity is generally neglected in accounts of American religion, and this book is no exception. This does not mean that in their religious travels Prof. Eck and her friends have not kicked off their shoes, as it were, also in black churches. But there are no reports here on how moving and inspiring she found their legendary rhythm and their handclapping enthusiasm. The omission is no doubt because the black church is also part of the "Christian country" that must give way to the new diversity that she champions. The Black Muslims, even if they are following their own lights, are sufficiently "other" to be of interest to Prof. Eck, but of much greater interest are the Muslims who follow the light of Muhammad, even if they are subject to "an imposed orthodoxy."

An Image Problem

Muslims, along with so many others, including self-described pagans and practitioners of witchcraft, are not "accepted" as they should be, Eck complains. Muslims, especially those from the Middle East, are frequently viewed with suspicion. The Qur'an declares, "Do you not know, O people, that I have made you into tribes and nations that you may know each other." Prof. Eck comments:

> As Muslims become increasingly articulate about their place in the American pluralist experiment, they bring this particular Qur'anic teaching to bear on the question of difference. . . . How we respond to it is up to us. The Qur'an offers us all a good place to start: we should come to know each other. But knowing each other is not easy in the American context. Misinformation about Islam and, even more, sheer ignorance of Islam, are common. . . . Newspapers bring to American homes the images of Islamic Jihad and other terrorist organizations, their rifle-toting leaders and their hideouts, creating a view of Islam as dangerous, subversive, highly political, and anti-American.

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She writes that "American Muslims may well be among the first to condemn [terrorist attacks] and to speak of terrorism as anti-Islamic," and that is true. At the same time, some of the major Muslim organizations in this country are deeply entangled with those who promote and carry out such attacks. Newspapers here may sometimes be unfair in portraying Muslims, but it was not American newspapers that blew up the World Trade Center or American embassies abroad. And the newspapers only report on the long-standing and repeatedly declared determination of many Muslims in the Middle East to drive the Jews of Israel into the sea. Prof. Eck writes that all religions have their extremists, and that is undoubtedly true. She compares Muslim extremists to the Aryan Nation among Christians, "one end of a wide spectrum, one thread in a complex pattern of faith and culture." The suggested symmetry, unfortunately, is not persuasive. The Aryan Nation (if it still exists as an organization) is an isolated and carefully watched handful of individual kooks, whereas the campaign against Israel and the "Great Satan" supporting Israel is waged by real nations who have created what Samuel Huntington calls "the bloody borders of Islam."

In June of this year sit-ins outside the State Department and White House were staged by the major Muslim organizations in protest against American support for Israel. Sponsors included American Muslims for Jerusalem, the Council on American-Islamic Relations, the Muslim Public Affairs Council, the American Muslim Council, the Islamic Association of Palestine, and the Muslim American Society. Their statement declared, "U.S. interests will be served and our credibility enhanced when we accept the role of a true honest broker and impose a level of responsibility on Israel consistent with the billions of American taxpayer-funded aid Israel receives per year." With respect to the approximately two million Muslims in America who are not American-born blacks, this does not represent, to use Prof. Eck's words, "one end of a wide spectrum, one thread in a complex pattern of faith and culture." Such actions and attitudes represent the organized public presence of Islam in America.

Muslims who are American citizens have every right to protest U.S. support for Israel, and a substantial number of other Americans agree with such protest. One gathers from her sanitized presentation of Islam and favorable references to the Palestinian cause that Prof. Eck is among those who agree. That is her right, of course, but the bias results in a gravely skewed depiction of Islam in America. It is quite possible that most Muslims in this country are more or less apolitical and want only to follow the long immigrant tradition of successful assimilation in American society. It is more than possible, it is almost certain. That is typically why people come to America. But unlike Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs, and others in Prof. Eck's multicultural jazz festival, the organized public presence of Muslims is dedicated to changing America's relationship to the Muslim world and thereby pits itself against an established component of the country's Judeo-Christian identity, namely, Jews.

Muslims say that if there is a Jewish lobby in support of Israel, and there undoubtedly is, why can't there be a Muslim lobby in support of the Arabs? Of course there can be and there is. But as long as the public presence of Islam in America is inseparable from anti-Zionism, that presence will be controversial, and will not readily be granted the warm acceptance and invitation to caringly sensitive dialogue that Prof. Eck enjoins upon all participants in the glorious mosaic of *A New Religious America*. I expect that Prof. Eck is well aware of these problematic aspects of Islam in America, which, given her purposes, is a good reason for her not to discuss them.

American Dilemma

"The questions that emerge today from the encounter of people of so many religious and cultural traditions go to the very heart of who we see ourselves to be as a people," writes Prof. Eck. At times the impression is given that her book is describing the America that is, at other times it is the America that should be, and at yet others it depicts multiculturalism as a project indulged in the privileged precincts of the contemporary university. But most of the time she insists that she is alerting us to who we are as a people. Borrowing the phrase from Gunnar Myrdal's classic study of race in America, she declares, "The new American dilemma is real religious pluralism, and it poses challenges to America's Christian churches that are as difficult and divisive as those of race." It is hard to know what such a statement might mean. The number of adherents to non-Christian religions is much smaller than the number of black Americans; those adherents were not for centuries subjected to the institution of slavery; they were not and are not the victims of legally enforced segregation; and she surely does not mean that Christian churches are going to divide over their attitude toward, say, Hindus the way they divided, North and South, over their positions on the status of blacks in America. Some, especially African Americans, might be offended by Prof. Eck's minimizing of the uniqueness of race as "the American dilemma," but here, too, she should perhaps be cut some slack. A measure of hyperbole may be excusable in view of the urgency of her task,

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which is nothing less than to alert us to who we are as a people.

In view of the prevalence of ignorance, hatred, and bigotry that she discerns in American life, the possibility of religious warfare arises. On this score, she notes that much progress has been made. "Today we don't form battle lines on the basis of Christian denominational polity as did our seventeenth- and eighteenth-century forebears. Episcopalians, Congregationalists, and Quakers are pretty much at peace today." She does not add, perhaps out of courtesy, that as religious forces in our public life they are also pretty much dead today. The fear of religious warfare, however, does seem remote, since, apart from the Muslim conflict with Jews, the new immigrant groups give no indication of aspiring to be a religious force in our public life. Perhaps that will change, but one expects not for a very long time.

Eck's book, like the multiculturalist advocacy literature of which it is part, makes much of the fact that there are allegedly more Muslims than Episcopalians or Jews in America, and that may be true. But how many Muslims are in Congress, or in the board rooms of major corporations, or heads of elite universities and philanthropies? With respect to Congress, the answer is zero, and with respect to other positions of influence, the answer is as close to zero as is possible without being zero. Of course a time may come when a Muslim is elected as a U.S. Senator or appointed head of the Ford Foundation, but it is almost certain that he or she will be successfully distanced from public identification with Islam, and certainly from identification with Islam's public presence in the form of anti-Zionism.

In reviewing Prof. Eck's book in the *Wall Street Journal*, Stephen Prothero, who teaches religion at Boston University, writes: "Yet whatever [religious] diversity we have is always being exercised in a Christian context. American Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam are all heavily Christianized. The Buddhist students I teach are strongly influenced by Protestant social activism. Some of my Hindu students revere Jesus as an avatar of Vishnu. Most worship in split-level temple complexes designed to function like evangelical megachurches." Mr. Prothero suggests that contemporary America is like what Zen Buddhism calls a *koan*, a paradoxical riddle. "That riddle is not, as Ms. Eck's subtitle goes, 'How a "Christian Country" Has Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation.' It is instead how America has managed to become both a Christian country and a multireligious society at the same time." I think it even more accurate to say that America has been and is a Christian society that has been remarkably welcoming to people of different cultures and religions, and has acquiesced in the privileged status achieved by Jews. For farther than we can see into the future, the religio-cultural circumstance will continue to be more like than unlike that described in the book so disliked by Prof. Eck, Will Herberg's *Protestant, Catholic, Jew.*

In her concluding pages, Prof. Eck allows that religious minorities are few in number. "All told, they may account for less than 10 percent of the population. But the news of this new century is that they are here, and in numbers significant enough to make an imprint on every city in America. Numbers do not matter." But, of course, numbers do matter, and the number of Americans who are not Christians or Jews is very much less than 10 percent, which would mean close to thirty million people. If we allow the generous estimate of four million Muslims, there are probably less than 10 million Americans whose religion is other than Christian or Jewish. That is less than 5 percent of the population. Apart from a significant number of non-Christian Asian Americans (Japanese-Americans, for instance), these minorities are socially marginal; moreover, apart from some Muslims, the non-Christian sector of the population is not inclined to make a public issue of their religious difference. A minaret on a city's skyline is not to be equated with an imprint on its culture.

The multiculturalism that, in the tradition of her nineteenth-century predecessors, Prof. Eck champions aims to transcend religious particularism in a kind of spiritual Esperanto. The problem with Esperanto, of course, is that almost nobody speaks it. Today, English is becoming the universal language that Esperanto aspired to be. Similarly, in America Christianity provides the encompassing religio-cultural context within which many "others" flourish. In a more sober passage, Eck describes the pattern of encounters with religious differences in America: "Some display the ragged edges of prejudice and stereotype, and some result in acts of insult and injury, vandalism and violence. On the whole, however, I would venture that the experience of immigrant religious communities is not bigotry and prejudice but a rough-hewn tolerance, combined with a kind of laissez-faire ignorance and individualism that enables people to live and let live." Exactly. That is the way it has been, and that is the way it will likely continue to be. One need only add that there is also the influence of specifically Christian tolerance, understood as part of the command to love the neighbor, and among many Christians the hope—which it is not polite to express in public—that the "others" will one day be converted to the Christian gospel's definite article truth.

A New Religious America is a spirited tract, and its author's enthusiasm is sometimes infectious. But it has

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as much to do with the religio-cultural reality of America as did her beloved World Parliament of Religions in 1893. Probably less, since that was at a time when liberal religion's confidence in its conquest of particularisms was at its peak. Today that confidence is in very short supply outside the confines of university departments of religious studies. For a more credible evaluation of religion and the American experiment—as it was, is, and almost certainly will continue to be—see Alexis de Tocqueville above.

FT

A Different Kind of "Coming Home"

Do we really need another conversion story from yet another radical who wandered for years through the sordid worlds of leftist delusions? The answer is yes when it is as well told as Ronald Radosh's *Commies: A Journey through the Old Left, the New Left, and the Leftover Left* (Encounter, 211 pp., $24.95). And the answer is yes if we are to understand the "leftover left," frequently ensconced today in the academy, media, and other positions of influence, and still driven by the same delusions. And the answer is yes again because, in fact, there have not been that many conversion stories. In the last few years, there was David Horowitz's *Radical Son* (reviewed in FT, August/September 1997), but for the most part it seems that old leftists who are no longer that still defend their earlier "idealism," or would as soon that they and everyone else forget the revolutionaries they once thought themselves to be.

Radosh cherishes a photo in which he, not yet two years old, is being trundled down Fifth Avenue in the 1939 May Day Parade, an annual festival of the Communist Party. "That day, it seems to me, was my baptism into the world of Jewish radicalism, a world so small and insular that it existed inside a political and social ghetto." Like Horowitz, Radosh describes in detail a world that is hard to imagine for those who were not part of it; a world stifling in its confinement to life defined by the Party, its many front organizations and causes, and the factionalisms produced by ideological shifts and quarrels. As a young man, Radosh of course joined the Party's youth movement, then called the Labor Youth League. "Most of the members of my branch, the Upper West Side LYL, were all Jewish," Radosh writes. I don't know whether he means that most were Jewish or that all were Jewish, with most of the Jews being *all* Jewish, but he is clear enough on what it meant to be Jewish in that context: "Another shared aspect of that Jewish upbringing was a purely cultural *Yiddishkeit* that emphasized Yiddish literature and theater, the folk writing of Sholom Aleichem, the parables of freedom that abounded throughout Jewish culture, and, most important, a complete rejection of anything to do with religion."

As Radosh now recognizes, the militantly secularist radicalism in which he was reared was his religion, a religion that he would later, and ever so slowly and painfully, abandon. True believers were trained to understand that every facet of life is part of "the struggle." The public school was part of the opposing system. "While the students of PS 173 came from homes that were largely Jewish [i.e., came mainly from Jewish homes], the teachers were mainly Irish and conservative. Our parents, of course, controlled the PTA, and this meant perpetual conflict and classroom stress." In an earlier generation, the Anglo-Protestants ran the public school system in which they "Americanized" Irish Catholics, who then took over the schools to do the same, with much less success, for Jewish children. Later, it would be the turn of Jews, aided by a Communist-dominated teachers union, to capture the system, now filled with black and Hispanic children to whom they transmitted the radical ideas that were, in due course, turned against the Jews in charge. The gyrations of New York City politics churn, in very large part, around the public school system and the circulation of ethnicities and ideologies that have succeeded in taking it captive.

Commie Camp

But the adults of Radosh's world did not leave the ideological indoctrination of the young to the mercies of the public schools. In summer, he and his peers went to what he calls "Commie Camp," in this case Camp Wo-Chi-Ca in Upstate New York. One gets the impression of a very earnest and humorless place, an incubator for what would much later be called political correctness. Campers solemnly took the oath: "We pledge ourselves to combat the influence of jokes, comic books, newspapers, radio programs that make fun of any people." But the kids also had their heroes, such as the folk singer Pete Seeger, who faithfully toed the Communist line throughout the Cold War. In 1995, President Clinton bestowed on Seeger the Medal of Honor in the Arts, and the *Washington Post* described him as "America's best-loved Commie." Radosh remembers an earlier and famous album by Seeger that is not much mentioned

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these days, *Songs for John Doe.* Its release was poorly timed, during the week of June 1941 when Hitler broke his pact with Stalin and invaded the Soviet Union. *Songs for John Doe* was filled with songs calling for no intervention in European battles on behalf of British imperialism and F.D.R., who was depicted as a warmongering Fascist in the pay of J. P. Morgan. "I hate war, and so does Eleanor, and we won't be safe till everybody's dead," went one rollicking verse to the tune of "Jesse James." Of course, the Party did its best to recall the album, as the left did an instant about-face, agitating for immediate intervention in the war against Hitler at the side of America's noble ally, the Soviet Union.

The bulk of *Commies* is devoted to Radosh's own adventures and misadventures on the left beginning in the 1960s and up through his final disillusionment. He writes that as late as 1980, when he was working with Michael Harrington's socialist organizing group in the Democratic Party, "I was certain that socialism was in our nation's future." What was earlier called The Movement was in disarray, having collapsed into a counterculture of drugs, sex, and juvenile zaniness. "The Marxist revolution we had hoped for was stillborn," Radosh writes, "but the sexual revolution was alive and well." Early on, his wife (the former wife of sociologist, then movement activist, Alan Wolfe) began to break ranks with the left by writing witheringly about the lesbian hijacking of radical feminism. While friends such as Michael Lerner, now editor of *Tikkun*, championed sexual liberation under the banner "Smash Monogamy!", Radosh became something of a rake, taking his sexual opportunities where he found them, and in these pages he settles scores in a way that will likely not be appreciated by some of the women involved.

The Church of the Left

But the larger story is his alienation from the left, and the fear of no longer having a place in the only world he knew. "I didn't want to be excommunicated from the church of the left where I had worshiped all of my life," Radosh writes. When, with Joyce Milton, he published *The Rosenberg File*, excommunication was only a matter of time. Julius and Ethel Rosenberg were convicted and executed as Soviet spies in 1953, and *The Rosenberg File* committed the unforgivable sin of proving beyond reasonable doubt that they were guilty. The Rosenbergs were as close as the Communist Party had to American saints. As one historian wrote in criticism of the book, "The Rosenbergs knew how to die; they knew how to sacrifice for their comrades." Their espionage was "genuinely patriotic," because their goal was noble. Friends on the left, including Michael Harrington, claimed that they knew all along that the Rosenbergs were guilty, but Radosh should not have said so publicly, since it played into the hands of "the other side."

Radosh feared excommunication, yet he wanted to break away. The book is in part an account of protracted indecision, of hoping that somebody or something would make the decision for him. Time spent in Cuba and then in Nicaragua under the petty Stalinist regime of the Sandinistas finally resolved the matter. With human rights activist Nina Shea in Nicaragua, Radosh visited with peasants who had lost what little land and livelihoods they had under the terror of the regime and were fleeing the country. "I realized," he writes, "that all during the decades of Somoza rule, Nicaragua never had refugees. I was probably someone waiting for a conversion experience; now it had arrived."

Ronald Radosh is now associated with efforts that, using previously secret documents from the Soviet Union, aim at setting straight the record of what is loosely called "McCarthyism." Senator Joe McCarthy was a rough customer who played recklessly with the truth, but his style of anticommunism was possible because there were, in fact, Communists. Radosh quotes favorably the important article of May 2000 by Thomas Powers in the *New York Review of Books*. Powers wrote:

> Soviet spies were of the left generally, they supported liberal causes, they defended the Soviet Union in all circumstances, they were often secret members of the Communist Party, they were uniformly suspicious of American initiatives throughout the world, they could be contemptuous of American democracy, society, and culture, and, above all, their offenses were often minimized or explained away by apologists who felt that no man should be called traitor who did what he did for the cause of humanity.

Set that by the last paragraph of Radosh's *Commies*:

> I don't see much of my old comrades these days. But I know that some of them continue to dream secretly of revolution, and still refuse to prepare a profit-and-loss statement on their past commitments. Arthur Koestler defined them once and for all when he wrote that "clinging to the last shred of the torn illusion is typical of the intellectual cowardice that prevails on the left." I once thought it would be impossible to live without these illusions; now I

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know that I would never have become a free man if I hadn't managed to get rid of them on my long journey home.

The story told by Ronald Radosh, like that of David Horowitz and some others, is redolent with the metaphors of religion—baptism, confirmation, church, worship, excommunication, conversion. Critics of both Radosh and Horowitz claim that, in their new-found conservatism, they still think and write and act in the factious mode of "the struggle." Red diaper babies, it is said, may switch sides, but they are incorrigibly at war. There is something to that criticism. *Commies*, like *Radical Son*, is not a peaceful book. These books conclude with evil abandoned and roundly cursed, but with no suggestion of a new world found. The "journey home" is a journey to America, to normality, except for the abnormality of being almost obsessively at war with the enemies of America and normality. The left was "the god that failed" but, unlike Whittaker Chambers' great *Witness*, there is no God found, unless it be the god of America, which is a nobler idol but an idol nonetheless. In testimonials such as *Commies*, refugees from radicalisms past render a great service, even if, in the end, they fail to understand that disillusionment is only part, albeit a necessary part, of being free.

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Morality and Moralism

What, if any, is the moral purpose of America in the world? That question has been much agitated throughout our history. People devoted to religion and morality are inclined to the view that our place in world affairs must be morally defined, and they are right about that. Despite the many who ignore or denigrate him today, a great contribution of Reinhold Niebuhr was to draw a sharp distinction between morality and moralism. The latter is the preening self-righteousness that lends itself to crusades that too often end up in catastrophes wreaked by the arrogance of presumed virtue.

Thinking about America and moral purpose is now divided into several camps. The celebrated "greatest generation" of World War II produced the architects of Cold War "containment," who were vindicated almost a half century later with the end of "the evil empire." But not without the rise of a counter-leadership produced by the disastrously failed American war in Vietnam. A few today, mainly clustered around the *Weekly Standard*, call for a policy of "national greatness," which is a little hard to pin down apart from its robust appetite for interventionism in the belief that a little (or maybe big) war from time to time maintains the muscle tone of the nation. Yet others are champions of globalization who seem to believe that the unstoppable economic dynamics of Wall Street and Silicon Valley have brought us to the point that we really don't need a foreign policy. Hence the title of Henry Kissinger's new book, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy?* (Simon & Schuster, 352 pp., $30).

Kissinger is often depicted as a Machiavellian amoralist or immoralist, which I think is a mistake. He has at times exulted excessively in the craftiness entailed in the craft of leadership, but his argument is that the morality of policy must be tied to historical experience and possibility. He writes:

> The very term "international relations" is, in fact, of relatively recent vintage, since it implies that the nation-state must inevitably be the basis of its organization. However, this is a concept that originated in Europe only in the late eighteenth century and was spread around the world largely by European colonialism. In medieval Europe, obligations were personal and traditional, based neither on common language nor on a single culture; they did not interpose the bureaucratic machinery of a state between the subject and the ruler. Restraints on government derived from custom, not constitutions, and from the universal Catholic Church, which preserved its own autonomy, thereby laying the basis—quite unintentionally—for the pluralism and the democratic restraints on state power that evolved centuries later. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this structure collapsed under the dual impact of the Reformation, which destroyed religious unity, and of printing, which made the growing religious diversity widely accessible. The resulting upheaval culminated in the Thirty Years' War, which, in the name of ideological—at that time, religious—orthodoxy, killed 30 percent of the population of Central Europe. Out of this carnage emerged the modern state system as defined by the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648, the basic principles of which have shaped international relations to this day. The treaty's foundation was the doctrine of sovereignty, which declared a state's domestic conduct and

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institutions to be beyond the reach of other states.

That is a succinct statement of the history that has brought us to where we are. Where we are going is another matter.

> These principles were an expression of the conviction that domestic rulers were less likely to be arbitrary than crusading foreign armies bent on conversion. At the same time, the balance of power concept sought to establish restraints by an equilibrium that prevented any one nation from being dominant and confined wars to relatively limited areas. For over two hundred years—until the outbreak of World War I—the state system emerging from the Thirty Years' War achieved its objectives (with the exception of the ideological conflict of the Napoleonic period, when the principle of nonintervention was, in effect, abandoned for two decades). Each of these concepts is under attack today, to a point where it is forgotten that their purpose is to limit, not expand, the arbitrary use of power.

Kissinger is highly critical of the drift of the Clinton Administration, and especially of ill-considered "humanitarian interventions" such as the actions in Somalia, Haiti, and Kosovo. While Kissinger wrote the book before the Bush Administration got underway, it would seem that the Bush team understands both the legitimacy and necessity of the nation-state. The current policy is sometimes called "unilateralism," but it is better understood as a determined internationalism based on the indispensability of American leadership and the morality of pursuing the national interest—it being understood that the national interest should be pursued, as much as possible, in cooperation with others, and that, for America, the national interest is inseparable from advancing moral goals such as democracy and human rights. There are, in short, encouraging signs of a return to the Niebuhrian insight that leftist dreams of a world rationally harmonized beyond conflicts of interest reflect a dangerous sentimentality. Clear thinking about the moral purpose of America in the world begins with clearing the mind of the cant of self-pretentious moralism, of jingoism, and of the economism that suggests we do not need to think about foreign policy at all. *Does America Need a Foreign Policy?* is not the whole of the story by any means, but it is a good place from which clear thinking can begin.

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WHILE WE'RE AT IT

■ Matt Labash of the *Weekly Standard* went to visit the Holy Land Experience in Orlando and got Rabbi Sholom Dubov, Orlando's only orthodox rabbi, to go with him. Marv Rosenthal, the founder of the enterprise, calls himself a Hebrew Christian, to which one rabbi responds, "A Hebrew Christian makes as much sense as kosher pork." Not so, says Rosenthal. If a Jew says he is an atheist, agnostic, or animist, Rosenthal observes, "the rabbis still say he's Jewish. But somehow if he believes in Jesus, he's no longer Jewish." After going through the Experience, Rabbi Dubov complains that it could seduce non-practicing Jews by the way it merges Jewish and Christian themes. "Why do Christians have to keep on taking from the Old Testament?" he asks. "Why can't they say, 'The Old Testament's old, we gotta new—out with the Old, in with the New'—but they don't say that." As it happens, the second-century Christian heretic Marcion did say exactly that. Before he was condemned by the Church, he persuaded many Christians that the evil Demiurge, the God of the Old Testament, was the antithesis of the God of Love revealed by Jesus. Truth to tell, a good many Christians who have never heard of Marcion embrace the Marcionite heresy. Christianity and Judaism have had, to say the least, a troubled relationship over the centuries, but it is doubtful that Judaism would have survived at all had Marcion prevailed. Mr. Rosenthal and his Holy Land Experience may offend Rabbi Dubov, but he should be very careful in wishing for the alternative he proposes.

■ Some years ago a conservative friend told me that he defines the conservative cause very simply: "Let's take the country back to the Eisenhower era." But, "as everybody knows," you can't turn the clock back. In fact, when clocks are telling the wrong time, we routinely turn them back, or forward. Societies are not clocks, however. In *The Great Disruption: Human Nature and the Reconstitution of Social Order*, Francis Fukuyama says our society went seriously out of whack in the 1960s, chiefly because of the change in sexual roles and in employment patterns forced by the rise of the information revolution. James Q. Wilson agrees that much went radically wrong about then—as evident in divorce, crime, out-of-wedlock births, ineffective schools, and much else—but he thinks the reason is chiefly cultural. The Great Disruption started at the beginning of the century and got up to speed by the end of the First World War. "The Bloomsbury set had replaced Queen Victoria, resistance to war had replaced habitual patriotism,

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and writers argued that crime was the result of social injustice rather than a weak human nature. By the 1940s, artists and musicians had taken up heroin, just as in the 1960s they took up marijuana and in the 1970s and 1980s they took up cocaine." The cultural disruption then chiefly involved the elites of society, and the depression of the 1930s and then World War II put an end to their fun for a while. Wilson calls that period the Great Timeout, of which our friend's beloved Eisenhower era was the dusk. "But when the war ended, and as the children of the Baby Boom reached adolescence," writes Wilson, "self-liberation returned with a vengeance and the Great Disruption was born." This time it was not just the party games of the elites but extended to the marginally middle class and poor who did not have the means to cope with such massive social destabilization. Wilson concludes: "In short, I believe that the Great Disruption was born at the turn of the century but only affected ordinary lives after the Great Timeout. I cannot prove this any more than Fukuyama can prove that it was a change in sexual roles and the rise of information technology that produced what we see about us. But we can certainly agree—again, alas, without proof—that, in time, ordinary people will reclaim part of an older culture and so permit the better parts of our nature to dominate the wicked ones." The Great Disruption. The Great Timeout. They are, I believe, two helpful phrases in understanding a time out of whack.

■ *Sinat hinam* is Hebrew for hatred without a cause, the kind of hatred among Jews that goes way on back to biblical times and marks also Jewry in America. This according to Samuel G. Freedman in *Jew vs. Jew: The Struggle for the Soul of American Jewry* (Simon & Schuster, 397 pp., $26). But it would seem there is a cause. Jews are fighting over who gets to define Jews and Judaism, and Freedman declares that "the Orthodox model has triumphed." In the absence of significant anti-Semitism, "Jewish secularism was not defeated as much as it was loved to death." Thus, "except for religion, Jews had little to hold onto that made them feel like Jews," and the Orthodox are the stewards of serious religion. Tova Reich reviews Freedman's book in the *Wilson Quarterly*, and thinks he is mostly right. She writes: "A group he calls 'Conservadox' combines the present-day Modern Orthodox with the traditional wing of the Conservative movement. The 'Reformative' comprises the left wing of the old Conservative camp and those Reform Jews drawn toward more traditional practice. All the rest, finally, he calls 'Just Jews.' The implication is that such shifts in alliance are a natural outcome of an ongoing, even healthy effort to adjust to new realities—nothing to get alarmed about." What Freedman describes, she says, "is also part of a rightward, fundamentalist trend worldwide, in Islam and Christianity as well as in Judaism. Purity of observance has become the gold standard to which more and more religiously inclined souls aspire." Reich seems somewhat ambivalent about this, but, with Freedman and Elliott Abrams in his *Faith or Fear: How Jews Can Survive in Christian America* (1997), she agrees that "Just Jews" don't have much of a future. She notes that less than 30 percent of Jews in America are in any way observant. "Whether it suits us or not," she says, "the survival of the Jewish people over the generations can probably be credited to the Orthodox hard core. *Compromise* is not a word in their lexicon." Perhaps so, but one notes that it is the "Conservadox" thinkers who take the lead in putting together a religiously substantive statement such as "*Dabru Emet*: A Jewish Statement on Christians and Christianity" (FT, November 2000), thus exploring a promising relationship to the majority religion and culture, as distinct from most of the Haredim Orthodoxy that simply stands over against that culture. On the other hand, something like *Dabru Emet* might not be possible were it not for what Freedman calls the Orthodox triumph. God willing, there will be a vibrant Jewish community debating these questions a hundred years from now, although not with, or not necessarily with, *sinat hinam*.

■ General rules serve, among other purposes, to highlight exceptions. A general rule is that good biographies are written by biographers who love, or at least are fascinated by, their subjects. Ray Monk's second and final volume of his biography of Bertrand Russell is a partial exception to the general rule (*Bertrand Russell: The Ghost of Madness, 1921-1970*, Free Press, 572 pp., $40). This large book employs as its epigraph an epigram attributed to Otto von Bismarck: "The greatness of a man can be measured by his intelligence minus his vanity." By that measure, Russell, who died in 1970 at age ninety-seven, was not a great man. As they say on the street, there is smart smart and then there is dumb smart. In the things that matter most in life, Bertrand Russell was dumb smart. In the first volume, Monk pays just tribute to Russell's achievements in philosophy and mathematics, notably in his collaboration with Alfred North Whitehead. But Russell never recovered from Wittgenstein's withering critique of the *Principia Mathematica*, and by the time he was fifty he came to the bitter recognition that, among the younger philosophers, he was viewed as something of a venerable fossil. Both in America and England, he made occasional efforts to return to what he called "serious mental work," but for the most part his years were spent in churning out "potboilers" (his

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term) on education, child rearing, world peace, sexual satisfaction, the achievement of happiness through atheistic self-reliance, and other subjects on which he was dumb smart and sometimes just plain dumb. In the last years he came under the influence of the young American radical Ralph Schoenman, and agitated first for nuclear disarmament and, later and more fanatically, for risking even nuclear war in order to advance Castro's and Che Guevara's worldwide revolution against "U.S. imperialism." Friends of Russell tend to excuse those years by portraying him as an old man in his dotage who was manipulated by youthful crazies, but Monk makes a persuasive case that Russell knew what he was doing, and that it was of a piece with an unbridled egotism in which he was convinced that he was a lonely prophet in a world gone mad. At points in *Bertrand Russell* I wondered if the indictment is not too severe, if he should not be given the benefit of the doubt, but then Monk promptly introduces more damning evidence that would seem to answer the doubt. This is a very sad story of Russell's four wives, of children alienated and driven to suicide, of friendships turned into bitter animosity, of relentless demands for obeisance, and of weak souls eager to submit. (Among the weak souls, the Nobel Prize committee, which gave him the prize for *literature*, of all things. Not for his early achievements in mathematics and philosophy but for his potboilers.) I remember reading as a young man Russell's *Why I Am Not a Christian* and thinking that, if this is the case for atheism, atheism is in deep intellectual trouble. The human rubble that he had made of his life and of the lives close to him did not inhibit Russell in his oracular pronouncements that "education"—meaning the process of coming to agree with him—is the answer to all problems personal and global. Russell's life is a cautionary tale illustrating Augustine's *homo incurvatus se*—man turned in upon himself. His animus toward Christianity finally came down to the Christian claim that one must acknowledge a wonder greater than one's self. *Bertrand Russell* is, for the most part, a sad and dreary story, but not uninteresting for what it says about the spiritual and intellectual character of the century in which so many viewed him as a giant. It is a moderately cheering thought that, for all that is debased in our culture, it is hard to imagine any figure exhibiting such vulgar hubris being accorded the public stature once accorded Bertrand Russell. Why that is the case, if that is the case, is a subject for another time.

■ As this goes to press, President Bush's faith-based initiative has passed the House, although not by the margin hoped for. It now awaits uncertain action in the Senate at the untender hands of the Democratic leadership. The bill passed by the House is seriously flawed, and the debate around it was by no means reassuring. Rigid church-state separationists got to include all kinds of restrictions against "sectarian" activity that could undermine the integrity of participating religious agencies. They also succeeded in using the occasion to attack, under the guise of "nondiscrimination," the right of religious organizations to choose their own personnel—a right entrenched in American custom and law, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964. In retrospect, it may have been a mistake to name the proposal "faith-based and community initiatives." It might have been wiser to speak simply of community initiatives, making it clear that there can be no discrimination against initiatives inspired by religious faith. That could have planted the "nondiscrimination" flag more firmly on the side of the proposal. All that being said, the proposal is still very much worth supporting, because the initiative to liberate and assist the "mediating institutions" of society to do their indispensable job in helping people is exactly right and long overdue. If the legislation is shot down, the conventional wisdom will be that the idea that inspired it has been discredited. The proposal should also be enacted because, at least in the House bill, there is wording that holds promise for the development of voucher and tax credit alternatives to direct grants (although the word "vouchers" is not used). Moreover, there is reason to hope that court challenges to the rigid restrictions on religion will prevail in view of the Supreme Court's recent and welcome rulings in free speech and religious free exercise. (See Douglas W. Kmiec, "Good News from the Court," elsewhere in this issue.) There is no denying that the legislation in Congress falls far short of the high promise of Bush's original proposal. That is simply another reminder that politics is the art of the possible in the knowledge that disappointments are inevitable but not necessarily final.

■ When the prestigious *Psychological Bulletin* of the American Psychological Association (APA) published an article "documenting" that sexual relations between adults and children usually had no harmful effects on children, it precipitated an enormous roar of protest. The APA quickly disowned the article, declaring that it most definitely does not approve the sexual abuse of children, which can often be, well, abusive. In view of its direction over the last decades of "normalizing" sundry perversions, why did the APA so suddenly reverse course on pedophilia and incest (the latter commonly being the context of the former), which seemed like the logical next candidates for acceptance? That is the question asked by G. E. Zuriff, psychologist at Wheaton College and the

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Massachusetts Institute of Technology. "At the political level," he writes, "the answer is simple. Winning the favor of the North American Man-Boy Love Association does not compensate for alienating most of the U.S. population as well as the Federal government, which regulates the practice of psychotherapy and professional associations, including the APA, controls Medicare and other insurance payments for psychological treatment, and funds psychological research and training." But why didn't the APA stand by the editorial integrity of its publication and say, as the authors of the article did, that, while pedophilia is psychologically harmless, it is still wrong and should remain illegal and socially unacceptable? That would have gotten them off the hook. That answer, too, while not quite so simple, is clear enough. Zuriff writes: "For the APA to admit that judgments of morality may be independent of psychological adjustment would be to admit that moral intuition does indeed play a critical role in social policy, that psychological studies do not fully determine what is good. To admit this, however, is to grant that although homosexuality, single-mother families, sex between adolescents, out-of-wedlock births, the rearing of children in daycare, abortion, and divorce do not cause psychological harm, they may nevertheless be wrong. In the end, the APA could not turn its back on a quarter century of social-policy positions." The orthodoxy of the therapeutic society is that psychology, and psychology alone, determines the meaning of, so to speak, right and wrong.

■ What is to be done about the Gypsies? It is not a welcome question in most of Europe, and a few small Gypsy organizations are offended by the suggestion that anything needs to be "done" about them. It is estimated that there are eight million Gypsies in Europe. (There may be as many as a million in the U.S., although they do not show up in the census.) Gypsy beggars seem to be everywhere in the cities, especially in Central and Eastern Europe. Last summer in Florence I was walking outside the great baptistry, dressed in sports clothes, when a Gypsy woman approached, pointing to a newspaper in her hand and seeming to ask a question. Immediately, I knew what was happening and clasped my hands over pockets carrying passport and wallet, and just as suddenly two other women rushed me, taking a couple of hundred dollars in currency that was in a pocket for which I did not have an extra hand. They were very professional, quick as lightning, and they had vanished before one could call a cop, were there a cop to be called. It was another occasion to ask my Italian friends, as I have asked Polish and German friends, about the future of the Gypsies in Europe. Even among people of the very best good will, nobody seems to know. In the Vatican there is a Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (disrespectfully known as the Council for Bums and Gypsies), and the people there undoubtedly do much good work, but they do not claim to have any answers apart from mandatory words—and they are mandatory in view of the skinhead and other expressions of hostility to Gypsies—about respecting human dignity and protecting minorities. The Gypsies (or, as a minority of scholars insist, the Roma), migrating originally from India, have been in Europe for a thousand years, and many colorful legends accrued, perhaps the most colorful being the Gypsies' own legend that at the crucifixion of Jesus a Gypsy stole the fourth nail intended for Jesus' heart and as a reward God gave the Gypsies a license to steal from non-Gypsies, who are called *gadze*. All of this is very intelligently discussed by Guenter Lewy in "The Travail of the Gypsies," and developed further in his recent book *The Nazi Persecution of the Gypsies* (Oxford University Press, 288 pp., $30 cloth, $15.95 paper). Lewy's conclusion is bleak: "It is likely that as long as Gypsies are discriminated against and harassed by their hosts, they will continue to stick together and resist assimilation. That seems to be the outlook for the foreseeable years ahead." And, as his discussion makes clear, as long as they continue to resist assimilation, and that resistance finds expression in criminal or quasi-criminal activity, they will likely be discriminated against and harassed by their hosts. It would seem to be one of those problems for which the word intractable was invented.

■ Others can speak to questions about the technical feasibility of a missile defense shield. On that I have no expertise, although I am struck by the fatuity of claims that glitches along the way show that it can't be done. Whatever happened to America's vaunted "can do" spirit? The moral considerations, however, are clear. They were addressed by the distinguished Methodist moralist Paul Ramsey in a 1973 paper written when the Cold War was going strong, "A Political Ethics Context for Strategic Thinking." Ramsey quotes approvingly the teaching of the Second Vatican Council: "Any act of war aimed indiscriminately at the destruction of entire cities and of extensive areas along with their population is a crime against God and man himself. It merits unequivocal and unhesitating condemnation" (*Gaudium et Spes*). The policy that has been in place for decades, Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD), is, said Ramsey, "the most politically immoral nuclear posture imaginable," since it is premised precisely on the act of war condemned by the Council. "To put

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the point bluntly," Ramsey wrote, "if counter-population warfare is murder, then counter-population deterrent threats are murderous." The logic of MAD would be more consistently implemented, he noted, if the Soviets and the U.S. would simply mine one another's cities, thus holding the populations of both countries hostage to the threat of being annihilated. Arms negotiations with the Soviets amounted to forging a permanent Sword of Damocles to hang forever over our heads. The alternative, Ramsey said, is to reduce and redirect the threat, and to work "to make defense as effective as possible." Our policy "should be more concerned with assuring live Americans than dead Russians." Paul Ramsey, be it noted, was a hard-nosed realist about international politics. I am among those who at one time thought him too hard-nosed, but later came to cherish him as a friend and teacher of unsentimental wisdom. The moral quandary of MAD was thought to be tolerable because, it was said, our nuclear threat did not mean that we intended to use it. On the contrary, we threatened so that it would never be used. At the same time, we could not renounce "first use" of such weaponry, since that would weaken the threat. MAD is madly logical in its dependence upon each party not being sure what the other would do. Admittedly, such thinking tends toward the convoluted. A very different approach, based on defense rather than mass destruction, was proposed by Ronald Reagan at the conclusion of a national broadcast in 1985. I vividly remember being almost knocked out of my chair. The proposal seemed almost like an afterthought, presented in tones of wistful longing for some better way to prevent nuclear horror. Some readers will recall the ridicule heaped on Reagan's "star wars," as the strategic defense initiative was called. Sixteen years later much has changed. The Cold War is over, and Russia and the U.S., no longer enemies, seem prepared to work together at dramatically reducing nuclear weapons and seeking an alternative to the lethal logic of MAD. It is just possible that our long captivity to what Paul Ramsey called "the most politically immoral nuclear posture imaginable" is coming to an end. I think he would have been pleased. Even as he would also be reminding us of new and unforeseen perils.

■ "The Holocaust is a mystery that we will never understand or comprehend." You have heard or read such statements a thousand times and Arnold Beichman of the Hoover Institute, for one, has had enough of it. He writes in the *National Interest*: "So what is this 'mystery' of the Holocaust? We have no difficulty understanding the genocides traceable to Lenin or to Stalin; Adolf Hitler adapted with equally diabolical success their doctrinal contempt for the individual in the name of Utopia. The Stalin-ordered genocide of the Soviet peoples, anywhere from twenty to sixty million, is no mystery. Mao Tse-tung's slaughter of—who knows?—fifty million Chinese is no more of a mystery than is Communist China's genocide in Tibet. There is no mystery about the killing fields of Southeast Asia where Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge murdered one-sixth of what had been a population of seven million. There is no mystery about Turkey's genocide of Armenians in the early part of the twentieth century. Of the fifteen million Afghans alive in 1978, more than a million are dead, thanks to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan two decades ago. There is certainly no mystery to Milosevic's killing of Kosovars, final figures not in yet. Why, supposedly, will we 'never understand' Hitler's Holocaust? I think it is time to stop defining the Holocaust as a 'mystery.' To call it such is to play into the hands of Holocaust-deniers and racists, and of the Nazis themselves, giving them an exculpatory dignity they do not deserve, as if they were tools, even victims, of some implacable destiny about which they could do nothing. How can we logically condemn what seemingly we cannot 'comprehend'?" For the believing Jew, he allows, there may be a mystery about why God has let His chosen people suffer so much, but there is no mystery about what Hitler did. Beichman again: "The real mystery is why Hitler and his retinue were not taken seriously. As the historian Milton Himmelfarb has put it: No Hitler, no Holocaust. I think one could argue: no Stalin, no Mao, no Pol Pot, no genocide. These dictators used Marxism-Leninism as justification for mass slaughter of the 'bourgeoisie' and 'landlords,' but in the end it was Stalin's personality that determined the Great Terror. The real mystery here is why, at the height of [their atrocities], Stalin, Mao, and company had so many admirers among Western intellectuals."

■ "Ours is a country in which you are ill-advised to be a fetus. The highest court in the land has ruled that you're a parasite, disposable at will, even when you're almost out of the chute. You're just an extension of your mother's whim. She can do whatever she likes with you. Her court-instituted right to 'choose' trumps your right to live." So writes Norah Vincent in, of all places, the *Los Angeles Times*. What set her off was the 6-3 Supreme Court decision that a hospital may not test a pregnant woman for drugs, although drug testing of government employees and high-school athletes is permitted because there are "special needs." Apparently the health of unborn children does not count as a special need. Feminists declared the Court decision a victory for the autonomy of

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women, but Ms. Vincent doesn't buy that. "We can do anything. We can have as much sex as we want—as much wanton sex as some men do—and we need not be concerned with the consequences. If the unthinkable happens, if—surprise, surprise—nature actually takes its course and we become pregnant, well, we'll just do what we do after we binge on too many French fries. We'll purge. After all, if you want to stay thin after eating everything in sight, then it's the finger down the throat. If you want to stay barren but have as much protected or unprotected sex as you want, then it's the doctor in your business—but not too much in your business. Only as much as you want him. What's more, when we're good and ready to have a child, we'll still be totally in control of our bodies. We'll smoke, we'll booze, we'll crack it up all night long if we take a mind to, and it'll be nobody's business. Because the Constitution protects us. We have a right to our privacy and our bodies, even though, when it comes to that seventh, eighth, ninth month of pregnancy, we're pretty sure we're not alone in them anymore. But who cares, those babies are ours, and we can do with them what we like. We can smoke three packs a day. We can drink motor oil. And if that baby comes out with a brain that doesn't quite work right or that doesn't work at all, if it has an imposed mortal dependency on a narcotic, if it comes out with expensive special needs, well, the government will pay for it. That's what government is for: to safeguard my right to do what I like and pick up the tab when I've done it. I can do anything, consequences be damned. Let freedom ring, because, by God, I am woman, and this is America."

■ Here's an advertisement in *America* by a company that sells what are infelicitously called church goods. The ad asks, "Electric Candles. Why?" On offer are those racks of votive lights where the faithful make an offering, joined to their prayer intention. The ad then lists the advantages of electric candles: "Profitable; Safe; Clean; Devotional; Zero Maintenance." And, in case you didn't get the point, *Profitable* is repeated in italics. "Stands pay for themselves. Generate income forever." Imagine that, income forever! The ad concludes with "Why Not?" The answer is simple. They are phony. Electric candles are not candles. They are phony in the most elementary sense that they pretend to be something that they are not. There is a long devotional tradition surrounding the use of candles. They represent a living flame of faith. Like real candles that surrender themselves in burning, we are to lose ourselves in devotion. Consider the elaborate ritual and words in connection with the lighting of the new fire and the resurrection candle in the Easter Vigil. In sum, electric "candles" mock everything symbolized by the candle in religious tradition. There are Catholic parishes that realize more than $100,000 per year from their candles. Quite apart from honesty and good taste, for that kind of money the faithful should be given the real thing.

■ When *The Black Book of Communism*, edited by Stéphane Courtois, came out in France, where there are still influential intellectuals who do not mind being called Communists, it caused an enormous storm. Leftist critics eagerly nit-picked the book's claim that communism had killed more than a hundred million people. (Others criticize the book for undercounting the number of victims.) Now the book has been published here by Harvard, and Peter Rutland of Wesleyan University has some wise things to say about calculating victimhood. "Courtois' obsession with the body count draws attention away from 'the immense sea of suffering' of communism's living victims, who outnumber the dead. [Contributor Karel] Bartosek warns of pursuing 'the myth of the number of victims,' in which 'the figure becomes a key symbol, a mathematical truth. . . . It transforms mass deaths into a kind of sacrament.' The Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia killed 'only' ninety people, and 'only' 3,000 died during the suppression of the Hungarian Revolution in 1956 (followed by 100,000 arrests). But these displays of force were sufficient to terrorize tens of millions of people into obedience for decades to come. The Soviets used 6,300 tanks to invade Czechoslovakia—twice as many as Hitler used to attack Russia. Similarly, [contributor Jean-Louis] Margolin notes that the Cultural Revolution was not particularly bloody by the standards of previous years. Perhaps 100,000 were killed by the Red Guards, and another million in the army's crackdown. Still, this proved sufficient to paralyze society. 'What use was killing, when the leaders could terrorize so effectively?' he writes. And since then, the system has learned how to function without mass killing, as did Russia after 1953. The Communists' ability to strip their subjects of their freedom, their dignity, and their ability to control their own lives is just as important a part of the Communist legacy as the sheer number of dead. It was the Communists' ability to use fear as an instrument of rule, not their ability to kill large numbers of people, that kept them in power for decades. This is where they differ from the Nazis, who only ruled for thirteen bloody years." He leaves no doubt that *The Black Book of Communism* serves a necessary purpose: "There is much to learn from this tombstone of a book. However many accounts one has read of the Soviet Gulag and Chinese *laogai*, there is always some new detail that takes one by surprise. One learns, for example, that in Romania prisoners

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were trained to torture each other; that some Chinese swapped their children in order to eat them; and that Kim Il Sung ordered the liquidation of dwarves. It is impossible to *imagine* the extent of man's capacity for cruelty—one has to read it to believe it possible." But the contemplation of evil, Rutland suggests, is not best done through a tabulation of victims but by reading the personal accounts of those who suffered. However systemic its operation, the source and consequence of evil is not understood until it is understood personally. As Solzhenitsyn observed, the line between good and evil runs through every human heart.

■ But what do the ethicists say? In an astute article in *Commonweal*, Gordon Marino of St. Olaf College urges a measure of skepticism in treating the proliferating breed of professional ethicists as though they are moral rocket scientists. "And yet there are strong psychological motives for wanting to recuse ourselves from moral decisions. For one obvious reason, it diminishes our own sense of responsibility and guilt. More than that, the fantasy that you need a doctorate in ethics to determine right from wrong encourages nonexperts to believe that ethics is an extremely complicated matter and so we should take a wait-and-see attitude toward our moral intuitions. Before obeying the inner voice that commands me to take more time away from my own private projects to help those less fortunate, I ought to let some time pass and think about it, for after all, ethics is a complicated matter; otherwise, there would not be so many experts on the topic. Kierkegaard taught that we should do what we take to be the right thing now, for the longer we wait the more likely it is that we will talk ourselves out of acting by convincing ourselves that the wide way is the righteous way. It may be that moral matters are more complicated than that complicated Dane envisioned; nevertheless, the image of ethics conjured by the acceptance of an ethical establishment tempts some of our worst impulses."

■ When it comes to religious freedom, it would seem that Orthodoxy speaks with very different voices, the Moscow Patriarchate and the Patriarchate of Constantinople. A document on "Social Doctrine" issued by Moscow says this: "The appearance of the principle of freedom of conscience testifies to the fact that in the modern world religion is turning from a 'common concern' into a 'private affair.' . . . In itself this process is evidence of the collapse of spiritual values, of the loss of all striving towards salvation in society at large, which is reinforced by the principle of freedom of conscience: affirmation of the legal principle of freedom of conscience is evidence of society's loss of religious aims and values, of mass apostasy and de facto indifference to the activity of the Church and to victory over sin." When asked by the Keston Institute to comment on the Moscow statement, Bartholomew of Constantinople declined to do so, but he did issue this statement: "Freedom of conscience is the greatest divine gift towards humanity, and that which represents most clearly the image of God in the human person. When we say that God created humankind in His image and likeness, we mean that He gave to humankind the spiritual qualities that correspond to those of Divinity, such as knowledge, will, and others, with the crown of all these being the freedom of will and conscience. It is clear that will and conscience which are subjected to some external or internal necessity from which they cannot be separated do not comprise a value of divine quality." Such dramatically different perspectives, it should be needless to point out, reflect very different understandings of Orthodoxy's place within the larger Christian community and, indeed, world history.

■ The *National Post* continues to dig into that story about the Canadian churches that are being sued into possible bankruptcy for the alleged crimes of "cultural imperialism" in conducting residential schools for Indians. Many things are coming to light. In 1960, for instance, less than a quarter of native students were in residential schools, the rest being in regular day schools; the people who ran the residential schools were government employees; church leaders recommended closing residential schools but "First Nation" spokesmen insisted on maintaining them. As for students being stripped of their native beliefs and forced to become Christians, already in 1871 53 percent of Canada's 3.6 million Indians identified themselves as Protestant and 43 percent as Catholic. In short, the case against the churches is falling apart. There seems to be no rejoicing, however, among the defendants, especially the Anglicans and the United Church of Canada. Prof. Ian Hunter of the University of Western Ontario says they "would rather be persecuted in defense of political correctness than be saved by truth. . . . The Anglican Church decided a long time ago to get 'on side' with the native rights agenda; the church has invested too heavily in historical revisionism to turn back now. . . . The Anglican Church started apologizing for residential schools in 1993 when Michael Peers, the Primate, timed the occasion to coincide with the anniversary of the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, a comparison Archbishop Peers drew to the attention of his native audience. Even the most outrageous of the residential school claims, that of 'cultural genocide,' has duly received clerical support; the [Anglican] Bishop of Toronto, Terry Finlay, applied that term to

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his own church's conduct. As the saying goes, with friends like these, who needs enemies?" Hunter concludes with the observation that "the Anglican Church has apologized itself into bankruptcy."

■ I mentioned in my discussion of George Steiner's *Grammars of Creation* ("The End of Endings," August/September) that pretentiousness sometimes gets in the way of his argument. Such restraint I exercised. Here is Hugh Lawson-Tancred reviewing the same book in the *Spectator*: "These habits are buttressed by not infrequent recourse to a tone of portentous oracularity which it is notoriously easy to find transparently specious. Indeed such is his predilection for polysyllabic obscurantism that he might almost appropriate the expostulation of the apocryphal jurisprudentialist who protested against allegations of gratuitous philological exhibitionism." Nonetheless, Mr. Lawson-Tancred, like me, liked the book.

■ This one hears with distressing regularity, from both Catholic and Protestant lay people: "My pastor says he is rock solid on the issue, and I have no reason to doubt him. But he almost never mentions abortion from the pulpit, and I cannot help but think he's afraid of being thought 'controversial.'" For such clergy, Priests for Life has produced an excellent packet of materials, "Preaching on Abortion," which provides persuasive answers to all the reasons why clergy may be inclined to shy away from their convictions. Included are examples of effective preaching on the culture of life. I expect these materials will do most good if they are, in a spirit of friendly encouragement, given to clergy by their own parishioners. Write Priests for Life, P.O. Box 141172, Staten Island, New York 10314, or visit www.priestsforlife.org.

■ One of the articles we take greatest satisfaction in having published is "Waco: A Massacre and Its Aftermath" (FT, May 1995) by the late Dean Kelley, longtime religious liberties director of the National Council of Churches. Recently, former Senator John Danforth completed his study of the incident—in which more than eighty men, women, and children were killed—with a report that has been widely criticized as very soft on government malfeasance. A competent summary of where the matter now stands is "No Confidence: An Unofficial Account of the Waco Incident," by Timothy Lynch, director of the Cato Institute's Project on Criminal Justice. "That incident," says the account, "has become the most controversial law enforcement operation in modern American history." (The nineteen-page report is available for $6 from the Cato Institute, 1000 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20001.)

■ Lutherans don't believe in the rapture. In fact the idea, which appeals to 1 Thessalonians 4, came from the mind of the British separatist John Nelson Darby about 1830, who divided the Second Coming of Christ into two stages: first Christ will come *for* his saints before the great tribulation (the rapture), and then, after the tribulation, he will come *with* his saints (the Second Coming complete). Premillennial dispensationalists share the belief that Christ returns before the millennium (pre-millennium) and that history is divided into dispensations leading to the tribulation, which is commonly identified with the "seventieth week" of Daniel 9. If this sounds familiar, it is perhaps because you are among the twenty-seven million people who have bought copies of the apocalyptic "Left Behind" books by Jerry B. Jenkins and Tim LaHaye. Followers of Darby completely separate the Church and the people of Israel. The Church must be removed from the earth by the rapture before God can get on with the business of converting the Jews in preparation for the end time. As I say, Lutherans don't believe these things, and Pastor David Buegler of St. Paul Lutheran Church in Westlake, Ohio, pulled the "Left Behind" books from the parish library. Somewhat to his surprise, this caused a bit of a stir, so he scheduled a Bible study meeting to discuss what is wrong with the Jenkins-LaHaye teachings. To his great surprise, six hundred people showed up, with some of the discussion turning acrimonious over who will and who will not get left behind. Buegler is not entirely displeased. "It's gotten people talking about the end times," he observes. The Jenkins-LaHaye books are published by Tyndale, and marketing director Dan Balow says, "Whenever anyone gets too worked up, I remind them that this is just fiction." Which suggests a title if your parish wants to hold a meeting on the subject: "Let's Lighten Up About 'Left Behind.'" That should draw a crowd.

■ A friend at Baylor University attended, along with eight colleagues, a two-day meeting hosted by Harvard Divinity School. He was ecstatic, reporting that the Harvard folk said they envied the unabashedly Christian commitment of Baylor and had a lot to learn from it. That is not how it is reported in the *Christian Century*, where it said that Baylor has "disavowed connections with the Southern Baptist Convention. . . . Strengthening ties with Harvard underscores Baylor's resolve to chart a different course from the denomination's ardently conservative leadership." Nothing is said about

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Harvard charting a different course. I hope my friend is right about the meaning of the meeting.

■ One may sometimes despair of our ever reaching a time when we can speak in an honest and civil way about the Holocaust. In this space I quoted favorably a reflection by Adam Michnik, a Jew and a Pole, on the tortured ambiguities of Polish history in that time of terror. Michnik noted that Poles are unfairly stereotyped and alluded to the many Poles who rescued Jews. "Do the murderers deserve more recognition than the righteous?" Michnik asked. Leon Wieseltier of the *New Republic*, who says Michnik is his friend, answers: "Well, yes, they do. Because there were many more of them. (I write this as the grateful son of a Jewish woman who was saved by the Poles.) The mention of the righteous is a way of changing the subject, if the subject is the unrighteous. It is designed to leave no guilt uncomplicated, no shame unqualified, no sorrow unalloyed." I do not think so. If there were many more murderers (and there were not as many actual murderers as Wieseltier implies), and if the widely disseminated view is that almost all Poles were bent on the extermination of Jews (and that is the very widespread view), surely there is a particular obligation to remember the righteous who would otherwise be forgotten. It is not a way of changing the subject but of addressing honestly the subject of Poland and the Holocaust. Michnik said that he cannot feel guilty about what some Poles did a half century ago, and Wieseltier criticizes him for not accepting responsibility for the group of which he is part. "I am not hurt," Wieseltier writes, "when I am interrogated about the misdeeds of Jews or the misdeeds of Americans, because I have chosen to be known as a Jew and as an American. . . . Indeed, I could not permit myself to feel pride about the accomplishments of my people and my country if I did not require myself to feel shame about the perfidies of my people and my country. If those perfidies were not the work of my own hands, neither were those accomplishments." This is deeply disingenuous. Wieseltier is not part of the "anti-Amerika" crowd and he well knows that, in terms of owning up to the historical record, it is much easier to be an American than a Pole. America was not conquered by the Nazis and then by the Communists, with all the brutalities and complicities attending such conquest. And as for the "perfidies" of the Jews, one wonders when Wieseltier was last interrogated on that subject. Perfidies of the Jews? The very phrase, stricken from the Good Friday Liturgy many years ago, is unutterable today, except perhaps among Aryan Nation types in the Montana wilds, and, now, in the *New Republic*. One wonders if Mr. Wieseltier might be more specific. But of course not. He is an American and a Jew. Especially in connection with the Holocaust, it is an identity of relative innocence that is easily borne. It is not so with Adam Michnik. Greater clarity of thought, joined to a touch of grace, might lead Mr. Wieseltier to understand why he should admire rather than deride his friend's reflection on being a Pole and a Jew.

■ If a racist who really despised blacks wanted to reduce their numbers, what might he do? I'm not suggesting that the abortion industry is driven by racism, although the founders of the industry, such as Margaret Sanger of Planned Parenthood, made no secret of their desire to eliminate the black, poor, and unfit. There are current data of more than passing interest. The U.S. census has now revealed that Hispanics have displaced African Americans as the nation's largest minority. That would not be the case were it not for abortion. Black women are 13.5 percent of the female population but have 34 percent of all abortions, their abortion rate (31 per 1,000 women) being 2.6 times the rate for white women (12 per 1,000). The best estimate is that 546,000 black children are killed each year, or about 15 million since *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. There are related tragedies. For instance, the demonstrated link between abortion and breast cancer makes it unsurprising that, from 1975 to 1990, death from breast cancer increased 12 percent among young black women while, over the same period, it declined by 9 percent among white women. One would think that black leaders would be concerned. Fifteen million black Americans would likely mean fifteen to twenty more seats in the House of Representatives. Yet almost every African-American representative in Congress is pro-abortion. Nor have black spokesmen such as Jesse Jackson and Al Sharpton been heard to say a word about public policy studies unabashedly tying the abortion of black children to the reduction in crime (see While We're At It, May). Has there ever been a people whose putative leaders actively promoted a policy that had the certain effect, if not the intention, of massively reducing their numbers and influence? No parallels come readily to mind.

■ "A regression to rubricism!" That's one reaction to the revised General Instruction of the Roman Missal issued last year. Rubricism, of course, refers to an obsessively punctilious anxiety about following the liturgical rules. Father Anthony Ruff, a liturgical scholar of St. John's Abbey in Minnesota, thinks some of his fellow liturgists should lighten up. Writing in *Antiphon*, he has this to say: "The most important

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thing to say about rubrics is that they are not of central importance. The focus belongs elsewhere: on Christ who acts in his Church; on the community that gathers to celebrate Christ's continuing presence; and on the mystery of redemption which is actualized in the liturgy. Rubrics exist only to serve these great mysteries. They do this best by being discreet and not calling attention to themselves. The responsible priest faithfully observes rubrics because he does not want to introduce any distraction that would divert the assembly's attention from the mystery and onto himself. Of course, no rubric is absolute and each rubric could probably have been arranged differently. In a sense, I do not care personally whether the approved books of our rite call for no genuflection, or two genuflections, or six, at the institution narrative. However, I do care that priests and liturgical ministers be willing to follow a consistent practice for the sake of the worshipers to whom their every ritual action belongs. Quiet and unobtrusive observance of the rubrics is entirely at the service of the prayer of the entire assembly. The laity should not have to adjust to the idiosyncrasies of liturgical ministers every time they attend Mass." Put differently, the Mass should be the Church's liturgy, not Father Bob's. Idiosyncratic impositions by clerics is a form of the clericalism that many such clerics claim to oppose.

■ The impulse to tame the Bible by bowdlerizing it into conformity with what we think it should say is not new. A current instance is "inclusive" translations designed not to offend feminist sensibilities. There is also a campaign to eliminate negative references to Jews, a campaign that has achieved some success with the Contemporary English Version published by the American Bible Society and the New Living Translation put out by Tyndale. So in John's Gospel, for instance, "the Jews" becomes "the Jewish leaders" or simply "the people." One may sympathize with the intention, but Marvin Olasky, writing in *World*, thinks such trimming is wrongheaded. "When we read in the Gospels that Jews demanded the crucifixion of Jesus, we need to understand that all of us in their place would have done the same. Biblical teaching about the universality of sin, summed up perfectly in Paul's phrase that 'all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God,' is compromised if we start thinking that some had not. . . . Such an emphasis on the unity of the human race and the universality of sin is the best defense against anti-Semitism. Some ministers, including some evangelical ones, do not talk about sin for fear of alienating some listeners. But if we don't emphasize our own sin, then 'Jews as Christ-killers' ugliness might return, with bigots saying, 'They, Jews, are sinners, but folks in churches have done better.' That is a different gospel, and an evil one."

■ When a "gender gap" is reported, the usual idea is that the gender (a.k.a. sex) that is behind should close the gap by catching up with the one that is ahead. Not in this case, however. The problem under discussion is "a gender gap in abortions," and the girls are already way ahead. The headline in the *New York Times* reads, "Modern Asia's Anomaly: The Girls Who Don't Get Born." Notable in the story reported by Celia Dugger is the acknowledgment that "girls" are killed in abortion. To be sure, the first reference is to "female fetuses" being aborted at startling rates in China and India, but then the discussion turns to social pressures "to abort girls." The story does not say that "boys" are aborted, but it is there by implication and a precedent is being set that may put the *Times* on the road to coming right out and saying that babies, both girls and boys, are killed in abortion. Or, as seems more likely, it may just be that the paper's rule of circumlocutory evasion is relaxed when a "women's issue" is involved. In any event, in parts of India and China only eight hundred girls are born for every one thousand boys born, resulting in all kinds of social dislocations. "Why," Ms. Dugger asks, "don't the women themselves—more likely than ever before to be literate—insist on giving birth to their girls?" This is remarkable language for the *Times*. Note the assumed bond between mother and child in the phrase "their girls." Note the implication that, despite the *Times*' incessant linking of abortion and choice, these women are aborting their children against their will. One might almost suspect that Ms. Dugger has snuck a pro-life story into the pages of the nation's foremost agitator for the unlimited abortion license. If so, she covers herself nicely, reporting that, wouldn't you know it, there are "many complex factors at play." Among the frolicking factors is China's "family planning rule" limiting couples to one or two children. Ms. Dugger does not say she is against the rule; her problem is that it is the girl babies who are disproportionately killed. It isn't fair. One solution might be to kill more boy babies, but that isn't going to happen anytime soon because the peculiar "patriarchal family" dominant in India and China favors boys and has a "prejudice" against girls. That is mainly because sons take care of their aging parents and daughters are thought to belong to their husband's family where they are to care for their in-laws. There is hope, however. "The experience of South Korea suggests that urbanization, modernization, and rising prosperity may help loosen the bonds of traditional family life," Ms. Dugger reports. In South Korea, the abortion gender gap is

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less severe as a result of a "weakening of the patriarchal family system as people become more independent economically and socially from their families." Ms. Dugger betrays no hint of irony in suggesting that the disproportionate destruction of girl babies can be set to rights by the destruction of the traditional family. She ends on the sobering note that "China and India are still mainly agrarian societies, and it is likely to be a long time before these lumbering behemoths can hope to see such benefits." It may be a long time, but one day these countries, too, may be in the happy situation of eliminating the traditional family and closing the abortion gender gap. The story begins with the observation that "Women are making strides in both India and China." The course of liberation, we are to understand, cannot be stopped. Between babies of both sexes, equal opportunity abortion is only a matter of time. On second thought, Celia Dugger probably did not intend to insinuate a pro-life perspective into the paper. Her concern is not abortion but sexual equality. "Discrimination faced by girls both before and after birth has contributed to the fact that fifty million to eighty million more girls and women might have been alive today in India and China had they received treatment equal to that of boys and men." One cannot imagine the *Times* treating as a problem the fact that more than thirty-five million people would be alive in America today if they had not, since the abolition of abortion law in 1973, been killed in the womb. Between the values of life and equality, equality is trumps. The objection is not to killing but to discriminatory killing. It is a logic of sorts. Call it crackpot logic.

■ I have noted that the Latter-day Saints, commonly known as Mormons, are increasingly moving toward identifying themselves with the mainstream of Christianity. Some welcome this as a substantive change, others suspect it is a public relations ploy. In any event the word from Salt Lake City is that the LDS wants to be referred to as the Church of Jesus Christ, and now the much smaller Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, based in Independence, Missouri, has formally changed its name to the Community of Christ. We all have reason to hope that these developments reflect steps toward substantive change that will, over time, make possible a less qualified acknowledgment of the LDS as part of the Christian community.

■ "Many men say there is one God; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are only one God. I say that is a strange God anyhow—three in one, and one in three! It is a curious organization anyhow." So declared Joseph Smith, founder of the Church of Latter-day Saints. According to *The Encyclopedia of Mormonism,* "three Gods form the Godhead," and "all resurrected and perfected mortals become gods." Further, "Though Latter-day Saints extensively use the scriptures to learn about God, their fundamental knowledge concerning him is based upon the Prophet Joseph Smith's First Vision, the Prophet's subsequent revelatory experiences, and individual personal Revelation." Noting the great Christological and Trinitarian decisions of the councils of the early Church, the encyclopedia flatly states, "None of these is the source of the LDS understanding of God." It should, therefore, not come as a surprise that the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome has issued a statement declaring that Mormon baptisms are not valid. Water is used and the formula sounds about right ("Having received Christ's mandate, I baptize you in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit"), but the third necessary element of a valid baptism is missing: the intention to do what the Church does when it baptizes. The intention is hopelessly flawed because, as Joseph Smith and subsequent LDS teaching make clear, Mormons do not mean by "Father, Son, and Holy Spirit" what the Church means. Rather, it is taught, the Godhead comes into existence as three Gods, sharing "substantially the same" nature with humanity, cooperate in the work of salvation, which is to make men Gods. The LDS desire for acceptance as a Christian communion has received a setback from Rome. The disagreement could hardly be more fundamental. Why the statement appears now was not explained, and clarification is awaited regarding former LDS members whose LDS baptisms have reportedly been accepted by some Catholic priests. And, of course, Mormons have always required baptized Christians who convert to submit to their form of baptism.

■ "We'll show those boorish Americans that they can't get away with their international unilateralism." That's the sentiment that, according to much media coverage, explains the ousting of the U.S. from the United Nations Human Rights Commission. In fact, says Nina Shea, director of the Center for Religious Freedom at Freedom House, the Europeans are interested in trading with tyrants, and tyrants do not take kindly to being criticized for their treatment of their people, which is what the U.S. insists upon doing. Writing in the *Weekly Standard,* Shea says: "Whereas in the past, the Western European delegations were in the forefront of the commission's work, highlighting injustices in South Africa, East Timor, and Bosnia, they now resort to euphemisms and half-truths. The

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United States stands virtually alone in striving to focus world attention on actual violations of human rights. Repeatedly at the commission, the United States has had to break with the European Union in order to vote its conscience on issues like slavery in Sudan, religious persecution in China, and political repression in Cuba. The United States often stands alone, too, in opposing blatantly political condemnations of Israel. The loss of its seat on the commission is meant to punish the United States for marching out of step." In addition to our allies in the European Union, the commission is now packed by freedom-loving countries such as Libya, Algeria, Cuba, Syria, and Vietnam. Shea and others in the human rights community hope that the U.S. position on the commission will be restored next year, but a good many thoughtful Americans have a hard time resisting the impulse to say good riddance to the commission, and maybe the UN as well. We should not give in to the impulse, at least for a time, lest permanent damage be done to the great good that has, in fact, been advanced over the years under the aegis of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. But Nina Shea, too, recognizes that, if the Western European nations do not return to the tradition of the Declaration, "the commission will have outlived its usefulness whether or not the United States recaptures a seat."

■ A tale of two Jacksons, graven images, and suspected extortion. Joseph H. Jackson was from 1964 to 1982 the conservative president of the National Baptist Convention and a statue of him was erected outside his Olivet Baptist Church in Chicago. The new pastor had it taken down because it was a "graven image." It will be relocated at the divinity school of Howard University, where they apparently do not object to graven images. As for Jesse Jackson, John Dart writes in the *Christian Century* that he is under mounting criticism for threatening corporations with boycotts and then accepting large donations from them. Mr. Dart's laconic last line: "Jackson has denied that there was a causal relationship between his withdrawal of boycott threats and the corporate donations." Causal, correlative, coincidental, whatever. But it still works.

■ "New Age" has been around for more than thirty years now, and is still a very big and growing item in the publishing world, according to *Publishers Weekly*. The story quotes Carl Weschke, a Minneapolis book man, who says there really is a New Age. "It's all for the purpose of giving us a higher perspective, so we can save ourselves and save the planet," says Weschke. Another bookseller, however, says, "There is an odd change going on right now. The words 'New Age' are stigmatized by society, but what New Age stands for is embraced by the mainstream more every day." The story concludes that more and more publishers and sellers are expanding their New Age output, but they are also "calling it by different names." Although *PW* doesn't say so, a good many of those books by different names can be found in Catholic and evangelical bookstores, not to mention parish libraries. A Presbyterian pastor tells me one of his parishioners is writing a book on crystal decoding—i.e., discerning the meanings of crystals and using them to influence the future—"from a Presbyterian viewpoint." He told his parishioner that this might not be entirely consonant with a Christian understanding of the sovereignty of God, to which he received the response, "I know. We have to rethink the sovereignty of God." According to the studies, only a tiny percentage of Americans identify their religion as New Age. So who do you suppose is buying those millions of books each year? Answer: people who are very sure that they are Lutheran, Catholic, Baptist, or Presbyterian but are also "into alternative spiritualities." For most of them, the real alternative spirituality would be orthodox Christianity.

■ So who, do you suppose, is the most influential evangelical Protestant of the last quarter century? Billy Graham? Bill Bright? James Dobson? Pat Robertson? Charles Colson? The answer is none of the above, according to the *Evangelical Studies Bulletin* that comes out of Wheaton College. Tim LaHaye, co-author of the zillion-selling "Left Behind" series, launched creationism in the 1970s, then went on to writing books that incorporated therapeutic and sex-fulfillment ideas into evangelical piety, and then with his wife Beverly (head of Concerned Women for America) was key to putting together what came to be known as the religious right. The *Bulletin* concludes that LaHaye was "influenced by all the changes swirling around evangelicalism, rose out of the ranks of the movement, and then in turn played a strategic role at key points that have cemented—for good or ill—the direction evangelicalism will be taking in the next few decades." Tim LaHaye, the most influential evangelical of the last quarter century? A plausible, if not conclusive, argument can be made for it.

■ It is no secret that, in the contention over abortion, Jews are overwhelmingly "pro-choice." Apart from the Orthodox, that view seems at times to be nearly unanimous. Alan Luxenberg writes in the *Forward*, the national Jewish weekly, that this is rather odd, since the Jewish tradition clearly allows for abortion only when the mother's life is threatened, and in a few

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other restricted circumstances about which the rabbis disagree. So why are Jews so strongly pro-abortion? "What is not widely understood," answers Luxenberg, "is that in endorsing this position these [non-Orthodox] groups are less interested in promoting abortion than in protecting freedom of religion." In other words, they identify the anti-abortion position as an imposition of Christian religion that is threatening to Jews. "The only problem," Alan Luxenberg adds, "is that too many Jews don't know what their religion preaches."

■ Theodore Roosevelt called it the bully pulpit, but little good it does if there's nobody who reports what is said from it. Addressing the American Jewish Committee, President Bush made a magnificent speech laying out the role of human rights, and religious freedom in particular, in U.S. foreign policy. The "newspaper of record" and the media that feed on it had hardly a word about what he said. Recalling America's response to horrors of the past, Bush said: "Such crimes are being committed today by the government of Sudan, which is waging war against that country's traditionalist and Christian peoples. Some two million Sudanese have lost their lives; four million more have lost their homes. Hospitals, schools, churches, and international relief stations have often been bombed by government warplanes over the eighteen years of Sudan's civil war. The government claims to have halted air attacks. But they continue. Women and children have been abducted and sold into slavery. UNICEF estimates that some twelve thousand to fifteen thousand people are now held in bondage in Sudan. The story of Exodus still speaks across the millennia: no society in all of history can be justly built on the backs of slaves. Sudan is a disaster area for human rights. The right of conscience has been singled out for special abuse by the Sudanese authorities. Aid agencies report that food assistance is sometimes distributed only to those willing to undergo conversion to Islam. We must turn the eyes of the world upon the atrocities in Sudan." Referring to the persistent and massive persecution of Christians and others in China, he said: "China aspires to national strength and greatness. But these acts of persecution are acts of fear—and, therefore, of weakness. This persecution is unworthy of all that China has been—a civilization with a history of tolerance. And this persecution is unworthy of all that China should become—an open society that respects the spiritual dignity of its people." This is news. Especially on Sudan, no President has spoken so forcefully before. Dozens of reporters were at the AJC meeting. What do you suppose they were there for?

■ Debt relief for poor countries was a very big item in John Paul II's vision for the Jubilee Year 2000. In Europe it was treated as such by the media, and was supported by numerous mass rallies. Not here. Dennis R. Hoover writes in *Religion in the News*: "While the European press gave significant coverage to the Jubilee movement, for the most part the U.S. news media passed on the story. In so doing journalists slighted a major global story that revealed a lot about the power of organized religious groups to influence political and economic policies. In the United States, for example, the campaign achieved considerable legislative success in the Republican-controlled U.S. Congress. Although the debt relief campaign may have seemed to issue overwhelmingly from the religious left, by the end, even Senator Jesse Helms was on board." The media here did play up the rally with the Pope at which U2 lead singer Bono and other celebrities appeared, but the connection with the Jubilee Year was largely lost. Hoover writes: "The American news media may have been too easily starstruck. In his January 24, 2000 *Newsweek* piece, 'Can Bono Save the Third World?' John Leland gushed, 'Thanks to a series of surreal encounters between a rock-and-roller and some people in very high places, debt relief is now a hot issue.' In the wake of a visit by Bono with the *Washington Post*'s editorial board, a clearly jazzed Sebastian Mallaby knocked out 'Pro Bono,' a September 25, 2000 column which announced that 'it's pretty clear that Bono and the alliance of nongovernmental advocates he represents make debt relief more likely.' But Mallaby had precious little to say about the 'nongovernmental advocates,' most of which are religious, or the religious motivations that connect them to their 'representative' rock star." Bono himself, however, has been effusive in his praise of the Pope's leadership. In one interview he also added, "I'm sure the work that I do at Jubilee 2000 is some kind of Catholic guilt, but it's working, so we'll continue with it." Let's hear it for guilt.

■ "Neurotheology." The editors at *Newsweek* probably half-suspected that they were party to a fraud in splashing the story all over their cover, which may be why they gave religion writer Kenneth Woodward space to refute it. The story is that scientists have been wiring people up to see what happens to their brains when they pray or meditate, and have concluded that human beings are neurologically "wired" for religion. Such experiments, writes Woodward, may tell us new things about brain circuits, but nothing new about God. "The chief mistake these neurotheologians make is to identify religion with specific experiences and feelings. Losing one's self in prayer may feel good or

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uplifting, but these emotions have nothing to do with how well we communicate with God. In fact, many people pray best when feeling shame or sorrow, and the sense that God is absent is no less valid than the experience of divine presence. The sheer struggle to pray may be more authentic than the occasional feeling that God is close by, hearing every word. Very few believers have experienced what Christian theology calls mystical union with God. Nor, for that matter, have many Buddhists experienced the 'emptiness' that the Buddha identified as the realization of 'no-self.'" That is not the only problem that Woodward has with the neurotheological hype. "Neurotheologians also confuse spirituality with religion. But doing the will of God—or following the dharma—involves much more than prayer and meditation. To see Christ in the person of an AIDS victim or to really love one's enemy does not necessitate a special alteration in the circuits of the brain. Nor does the efficacy of a eucharistic celebration depend on the collective brain waves of the congregation. In short, religion comprehends a whole range of acts and insights that acknowledge a transcendent order without requiring a transcendent experience." Woodward is clearly on a roll, so let's hear him out: "Science, of course, does not deal with the immaterial (though aspects of modern physics come pretty close). The most that neurobiologists can do is correlate certain experiences with certain brain activity. To suggest that the brain is the only source of our experiences would be reductionist, ignoring the influence of other important factors, such as the will, the external environment, not to mention the operation of divine grace. Even so, it is hard to imagine a believer in the midst of a mystical transport telling herself that it is just her neural circuits acting up. Like Saint Augustine, who lived fifteen centuries before we discovered that the brain makes waves, the religious mind intuits that 'Thou has made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless till they rest in Thee.'"

■ The claim that the unlimited abortion license is responsible for cutting crime as much as 50 percent was advanced by John J. Donohue and Steven Levitt and has received enormous media attention. It also came in for discussion in these pages (While We're At It, May). The Donohue-Levitt argument is that abortions are disproportionately obtained by women, largely poor and black, who terminate the "unwanted" children most likely to engage in criminal acts, especially murder. That thesis is critically engaged and persuasively countered by John Lott of Yale Law School and John Whitley, an economist at the University of Adelaide, Australia, in "Abortion and Crime: Unwanted Children and Out-of-Wedlock Births." They offer impressive data and analysis suggesting that the abortion license actually increases crime by increasing premarital sexual activity and the number of out-of-wedlock births. While Donohue-Levitt speculate about the children that were not born, Lott-Whitley focus on the children who are born in circumstances where they lack the support of "human capital" and are therefore more prone to crime, especially murder. During 1965-69, only 4.8 percent of whites were born out-of-wedlock, and that figure rose to 16.1 percent in 1985-89, while the comparable figures for blacks are 34.9 and 61.8 percent. The Lott-Whitley argument is sophisticated and, of course, complicated, including cohort discriminations, statistical regression rates, and other jargon of the trade. As for the social benefits of abortion, Donohue-Levitt suggest that abortion reduces annual victimization costs by $30 billion, with most of this coming from reductions in murder. "Our results," write Lott-Whitley, "indicate that total victimization costs rose as a result of abortion." Of course you are right if you think the cost-benefit analysis of taking innocent human lives unspeakably repugnant. But the fact is that the social costs argument has been a staple in the pro-abortion movement. An earlier eugenics movement and people such as Margaret Sanger made it a centerpiece of their case, and as recently as the 1970s Planned Parenthood routinely issued data on how much money was saved on welfare by terminating the children of the poor. In recent years, it has not been polite to be so explicit about that, but, whatever their intentions (see Donohue's letter of protest in this issue), the Donohue-Levitt article brought that way of thinking back into the open. One hopes that the Lott-Whitley study will receive similar attention, alerting people to the reality that the social costs argument for abortion is not only morally repugnant but factually unfounded. (The Lott-Whitley study is available online at http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=270126.)

■ *Sister Mary Explains It All* is a Showtime movie that, I am told, indulges in the usual Catholic-bashing. Asked by a columnist whether the movie is not an exercise in religious bigotry, Showtime's CEO, Matt Blank, says, "Listen, I'm Jewish. We're a home for wayward movies." Asked the same question, Marshall Brickman, the film's director, says, "Listen, I'm Jewish. I reserve the right to satirize any minority." Which, being translated, means, "Listen, I'm Jewish. I'm entitled to be a bigot." The Anti-Defamation League has not yet issued a protest against this defamation of what it means to be Jewish.

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■ Father's Day, to say the obvious, is intended to affirm fathers and fatherhood. If you were running a major newspaper, you might this year have focused on the cumulative studies conclusively demonstrating that the two-parent family is the single most important variable affecting a child's well-being on a host of scores. But of course you don't run the *Washington Post*, which this Father's Day featured on its front page a wedding at which the bride had two fathers giving her away, one the biological father, one the stepfather, or whatever. And you certainly don't run the *New York Times*, which ran a long story under the title "Single Dads Wage Revolution One Bedtime Story at a Time." The report and photos of straight and gay daddies aimed at cutely making the point that, as Gloria Steinem said in another connection, children need mothers like a fish needs a bicycle. In other words, Father's Day was the occasion for firing another salvo in the culture war that the *Times* denies it is waging. A journalist might excuse the story by saying that it is the unusual that makes for newsworthiness, but at this point in our history single-parent families are hardly unusual. Moreover, as Professor David Popenoe, one of our leading experts on the family, points out in a letter to the *Times*, the phenomenon so breathlessly celebrated by the *Times* is hardly new. "A much higher percentage of single-parented children lived with their fathers in 1900 (27 percent) than do so today (close to 17 percent)." Popenoe adds that, unlike most single mothers who don't have a man to help with the housework and the kids, "single" fathers typically have a woman in the house. Popenoe concludes, "Some revolution." To be sure, in 1900 many more fathers cared for their children because they were widowed, which was understood to be a great sadness. The new thing is the cultural revolution promoted by major institutions such as the *Times* which plump for depriving children of the inestimable gift of living in a home with both parents.

■ "Diligently to Thy Children: The Case for School Choice" is a twenty-two-page pamphlet by Adam Pruzan and published by Toward Tradition. It is a very convincing answer to the seven most common objections to school choice raised by Jewish liberals, but not only by liberals who are Jewish. If you enclose return postage, I expect that Toward Tradition would be glad to send you a copy. Write Toward Tradition, 9311 S.E. 36th Street, Suite 100, P.O. Box 58, Mercer Island, Washington 98040.

■ Law professor Ronald J. Rychlak published a fine book decisively refuting the many smears against Pius XII and his "silence" regarding the Holocaust, *Hitler, the War, and the Pope* (Genesis). *Book TV* on C-SPAN 2 had him for a debate with four panelists taking the opposite view. The same program aired a lecture by James Carroll, author of the scurrilous *Constantine's Sword* (reviewed in FT, May), followed by commentary from, in the words of the moderator, "two friends and one great admirer." I don't wish to shock you, but there would appear to be a double standard at work here. After the impressive refutations by Rychlak, Rabbi David Dalin in the *Weekly Standard*, and others, I had rather hoped that the attacks on Pius XII would fade, at least for the time. But now I learn that two new attack books are scheduled for this fall, one by David Kertzer, which extends the indictment to Pius XI. So we will just have to brace ourselves, and keep on responding point by point. A couple of points not made elsewhere are in Rychlak's review of Carroll in the *Washington Post*. Carroll makes much of the fact that Pius XII did not publicly announce the excommunication of Hitler, but Rychlak notes that Carroll, an ex-priest, discusses his own excommunication in his memoir *An American Requiem*, making light of it. "Would it have mattered more to Hitler?" Rychlak asks. Carroll also peddles, without citing any documentation, the story that John XXIII condemned Pius XII on his deathbed. Rychlak took the trouble of tracking down Pope John's private secretary who was with him during the days of his dying, and he emphatically says the story is "a lie." In addition, as Rychlak notes, we do have the documents in which Pope John says that, in rescuing Jews and other matters, he was only following the lead of Pius XII. Of course, this can get tedious, but there is no alternative to answering the critics lie by lie. From Rolf Hochhuth's 1964 play *The Deputy* to James Carroll, David Kertzer, and others, no secret is made of the fact that their driving interest is in attacking the Catholic Church and, especially in Carroll's case, the history and teachings of Christianity tout court. That some of the critics adamantly insist that they are Catholics is of psychological interest, but has no bearing on the facts in dispute. The refutation of slander, if it is to be persuasive, cannot degenerate into an uncritical defense of Pius XII or of everything done and left undone by church leadership. John Paul II has repeatedly called for, and repeatedly acted to advance, a "purification of memories." But when is enough enough? some ask. Others say that admissions of failings should be contingent upon others reciprocating by admitting their failings, or at least acknowledging that we have admitted ours. Such responses are understandable, but our obligation is one of open-ended patience and persistence. Ours it is, in the words of St. Paul, to "speak the truth in love," even as we recognize that there will always be others who do not love the truth.

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■ Did Justice Clarence Thomas watch pornographic films twenty years ago? The very question pollutes our public discourse, but it has been all over the major newspapers and magazines in connection with David Brock's new book *Blinded by the Right.* In his 1993 book, *The Real Anita Hill,* Brock defended Thomas' denial of Hill's claim. I know Justice Thomas as a good and honorable man, and I believe him. I do not know Brock, who now says he believes Hill, but I think the editors of *OpinionJournal* got it exactly right: "Either Brock was lying in 1993 to further his career as a conservative journalist, or he's lying now to further his career as an ex-conservative ex-journalist. One thing is clear: David Brock is a liar."

■ The *New York Times Magazine* has a weekly column called "The Ethicist," written by Randy Cohen, who is, presumably, an expert on ethics. A reader asks him for his judgment regarding a referendum in Slovenia in which 72.4 percent of the citizens voted against allowing single women to be artificially inseminated. Supporters contended that the right of a child to have a father should take priority over the right of a woman to have a child. Mr. Cohen's response: "This is the unseemly imposing of narrow religious beliefs given the pseudo-justification of crackpot notions of child-rearing." Next question?

■ A grotesque twist that fiction could not get away with is reported by the Associated Press. Germany has been staunchly resisting the push to permit using human embryos to obtain cells for research, but according to correspondent Burt Herman, one state governor has come up with a plan to allow the use of imported embryos for that purpose. The plan calls for the importation of these human lives just starting out—lives that some call "subhuman"—from Israel. Never again?

■ The G-7 leaders met in Genoa, with Russia, the wannabe eighth, invited to drop by afterwards. An estimated fifty thousand protestors rioted for sundry causes under the banner "Smash Capitalism!" The second day of the meeting, the lead story in the *New York Times* is under the heading, "Leaders Continue Meeting, Despite Death of Protester." How heartless. Presumably the world leaders should have called off the meeting after a young man was shot in the act of attacking an Italian police car. The next day the *Times* report continued to fret that the nations of the world were not letting the rioters set their agenda. "But in private, several of Mr. Bush's aides conceded that the imagery of the leaders meeting in the splendor of a thirteenth-century medieval palace, while smoke and tear gas wafted over the hills nearby, seemed only to highlight the gulf between the leaders and the protestors." Oh, dear. In fact, Mr. Bush did his best to "highlight the gulf" between his determination to include, and the rioters' desire to exclude, poor nations from what the encyclical *Centesimus Annus* calls the circle of productivity and exchange. For the *Times,* however, radical chic is still chic, even when dressed in the tattered rags of socialisms past. It is not that the editors have a love affair with socialism, although some do, but they are in the grip of their (usually inflated) memories of their own youthful rambunctiousness. Remember Chicago '68! Remember the Catonsville Nine! Remember whatever. Show them a picture of a young thug throwing a firebomb at the pigs, and they're off on their Wordsworthian reverie, "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, / But to be young was very heaven!" What with arthritis and one's membership in the AARP, reporting for the *Times* is not quite the same as marching again, but it's the next best thing.

■ Morally astute is the phrase I ordinarily use with reference to the writings of Charles Krauthammer. But I'm afraid he went off the track on stem cell research involving government funding for the creation, use, and destruction of human lives that are just getting started. His is the usual argument for accepting at face value the enticing promissory notes of great cures proffered by those who want to do the previously forbidden. Writing in the *Washington Post,* he does say that "unless we treat the opposition arguments with respect, rather than reflexive disdain, we will fail to appreciate the looming dangers—moral and biological—inherent in this unprecedentedly powerful new technique." He concludes that we should proceed "with extraordinary care and decent respect for those who, possessed of a keener sense of man's potential for evil and folly, would have us pause before plunging into the biological unknown." Pause, then plunge. That is not the counsel offered by those "possessed of a keener sense of man's potential for evil and folly," a company in which Charles Krauthammer is usually to be found. The next month, Mr. Krauthammer was rediscovering his moral footing. He was no longer so sure that a line could be maintained once we started on the slippery slope of permitting embryonic stem cell research. What changed his mind was a bill in Congress, strongly supported by the biotech industry, to legalize the cloning of embryos. Krauthammer wrote that, if such cloning is not absolutely forbidden, "then stem cell research itself must not be supported either—because then all the vaunted promises about not permitting the creation of human embryos solely for their exploitation and destruction will have been *shown in*

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advance to be a fraud (emphasis his)." That is the argument made by Leon Kass and many others, and it is precisely right. Once the use and destruction of existing embryos is permitted, there is no principled reason against, and powerful incentives for, the creation of more embryos solely for exploitation and destruction. Those who deride the slippery slope metaphor are, more often than not, denying the undeniable, namely, that one thing follows upon another unless principled reason, backed by law and popular judgment, can give an answer to the question, Why not? As this goes off to press, President Bush has announced his decision on stem cell research, possibly the most important of his presidency. There will, of course, be more on that in these pages. For the moment, I believe it is a morally defensible decision, although critics are right to note that the distinction between using human embryos and using stem cells derived from human embryos after "the life or death decision has been made" is not as bright a line as Bush's explanation suggested. In addition, he failed to say that what will not be done with federal funding should not be done at all. On the other hand, his address to the nation was without doubt the most lucid and straightforward presidential statement on the beginnings of human life and our moral responsibility for such lives since the fateful turn of *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. Readers familiar with Leon Kass' writings in this journal will not be surprised that we are greatly heartened by his appointment to head the presidential council that will provide moral and scientific guidance on these questions that, under the pressure of "the technological imperative" and entrepreneurial dreams of avarice, threaten what C. S. Lewis rightly called the abolition of man.

■ The Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches (MCC) is moving into the mainline. MCC is a gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transsexual denomination of about forty-four thousand members and, although it has been denied membership in the National Council of Churches so far, classes on MCC doctrine and polity are taught at a number of mainline/oldline seminaries, MCC representatives sit on committees of the National and World councils of churches, and the denomination is a full-fledged member of several state councils of churches. This article in the *Christian Century* notes that the MCC is becoming more "diverse," with lesbians almost equaling the number of male homosexuals and with congregations "adhering" to a mix of evangelical, liturgical, New Thought, and Unitarian teachings. Adhering does not seem quite the right word. Starting out with a commonality that is presumably not a choice, everything else is.

■ *American Demographics* makes much of changes in funeral practices. The changes are not very striking, but if you publish a magazine plumping demographics, you have to make do with what you have. Kooky death practices have always been with us, such as a funeral parlor decked out like a boxing ring, or another with a deceased fisherman's friends telling tales about the one that got away. John Cameron of the national Funeral Directors Association says, "The most successful clergy are the ones who bend to the personal wishes of the family." So it is news that pandering pays? "I expect more rock 'n' roll funerals in the future," says Cameron. Expect and ye shall receive. Here is a new kink, however: mixing the cremated remains with paint to create a portrait of the loved one. This is described as being "both constructive and tasteful." It may not look like grandma, but it is.

■ In Saskatchewan, Canada, the Human Rights Commission has fined Hugh Owens for placing an ad and the *Saskatoon StarPhoenix* for carrying it. It was a small ad showing two stick men holding hands, a circle around them and a slash through the circle, and then listing, but not quoting, four Bible passages: Romans 1, Leviticus 18:22, Leviticus 20:13, and 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. Three homosexuals lodged a complaint that the ad incited to hatred. The *Ottawa Citizen* reports, "The slashed figures alone are not enough to communicate hatred, said the ruling. But the addition of the biblical references [is] more dangerous." Said commission lawyer Valerie Watson, "It is obvious that certain of the biblical quotations suggest more dire consequences and there can be no question that the advertisement can objectively be seen as exposing homosexuals to hatred or ridicule." Dire consequences, indeed. The commission obviously has to go after the publishers of the Bible, and perhaps they will do that when the Jebusites, Amorites, and Hittites, and others unflatteringly portrayed, get their legal teams together. Nor will it be sufficient to allow the printing only of the New Testament, what with all those insensitive references to whoremongers, idolaters, and the "present generation of vipers." No doubt the last reference can objectively be seen as exposing even the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission to hatred or ridicule. Preferably ridicule.

■ Commenting on a particularly egregious instance of genderized linguistics perpetrated by the State Bar of Georgia, based in Atlanta, I proposed a paraphrase on the city's motto: the city too busy to think. Now Bill Hinesley of Skidaway Island Presbyterian Church reports that the church wanted to advertise for a youth minister in the *Journal-Constitution*. The ad said,

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inter alia, that the candidate should be "experienced in church and youth work and demonstrate a contagious faith in Jesus Christ." The paper refused the ad because it mentioned "contagious faith" and "Jesus Christ." Some may be tempted to think that the Old South that Atlanta is so busy trying not to be begins to look good.

■ Here's progress, of a sort. Many years ago an evangelical publisher brought out a book by C. S. Lewis with his picture on the back of the dustjacket. He was holding his hand in an odd way, as though there was something in it, but there was nothing there. Around his head was a large cloud. It was, of course, a cloud of pipe smoke, but the publisher, in order not to offend, had brushed out the pipe, with the result that Lewis' head was surrounded by this numinous nimbus. My classmates and I referred to him as See Shekinah Lewis. But now we've all grown up a little. The smoke, and the pipe as the source of the smoke, is prominently displayed on the cover of *World*, an evangelical magazine, in its issue exploring the nefarious doings of HarperCollins. Inside the issue is another large photo in which Lewis is smoking—brace yourself—a cigarette. And all this without a censorious comment by the editors. For one who smoked a pipe for years and is known to still enjoy a cigar, this is a gratifying change. As for the doings of HarperCollins and the mysterious Lewis estate, it seems they are up to no good. They're harassing a filmmaker because her work on Lewis is presumably too Christian, and are planning to add to the countless millions of dollars they've already made on Lewis' books by authorizing new Narnia stories devoid of Christian imagery. Embarrassed by the publicity, HarperCollins denies that they intend to bowdlerize the Lewis legacy, but *World* suggests that the publisher is, so to speak, just blowing smoke.

■ You may already have noticed something new with this issue. Sam Fentress of St. Louis, Missouri, has for years been traveling around the country taking pictures of popular manifestations of religion in the public square. The first in a series we'll be running this year, "Christ is the Answer," is near Palma, Kentucky. So why are we running these photographs? I'm not sure. Because they are interesting. Because they provide relief from the otherwise erudite content of the magazine. Because they reflect a dimension of religion and public life that should not be considered beneath notice. Because maybe they will attract the attention of a publisher who will be interested in putting them together in a book. (Sam has hundreds more where these came from. For more information, visit his website, www.jesuspix.com.) If you find none of these reasons persuasive, just accept them as a fillip of whimsy. As Alexander VI is supposed to have said of the papacy, so I say, "Since God has seen fit to give us a magazine, let us enjoy it."

■ "I'm tired of people trying to recruit me to this cause or that." All right, I can understand that. But this does not require much and would be greatly appreciated. You simply suggest to the librarian—at the local branch, college, university, or parish—that they really should subscribe to FT. Or politely ask the manager why the bookstore does not have FT in its magazine rack. It might also be greatly appreciated by people who do not now realize that FT is just what they've been looking for.

■ Of the many letters received, among the more gratifying are those of people, especially young people, returning to the faith through their encounter with FT. Some of these testimonials may be just a little exaggerated. After all, the journal is not in the strictest sense of the term a means of grace. But with so much encouragement we are emboldened to think that it may be an instrument of higher purposes. We will be happy to send a sample issue of this journal to people you think are likely subscribers. Please send names and addresses to First Things, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, New York 10010 (or e-mail to subscriberservices@pma-inc.net). On the other hand, if they're ready to subscribe, call toll free 1-877-905-9920, or visit www.firstthings.com.

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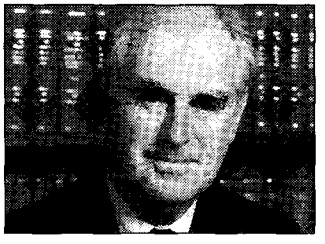

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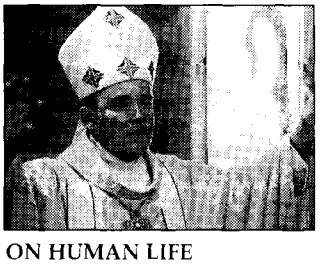

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